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Welcome
Lynne McTaggart and Bryan Hubbard
Editors



Brains on fire

Much of modern psychiatry rests on the assumption that mental illness is a biological or genetic disease. Nowhere is this more evident than with serious conditions like depression, bipolar disorder or even schizophrenia—all catch-all terms used to describe individuals who supposedly have lost contact with reality and suffer from delusions, hallucinations, illogical thought processes or generally disturbed and even suicidal thoughts or behaviour.

In some cases, medicine may be correct in blaming body chemistry, but by seeking the cause in some sort of faulty wiring in the brain itself, it could be fingering the wrong culprit. For years, studies have suggested that some of the behaviour that we label depression, schizophrenia or bipolar disorder may in fact be caused by nutritional deficiencies and allergies.

And the latest information, the subject of our cover story this month (page 46), shows that the root of much so-called mental illness is a body and brain on fire.

Systemic inflammation is caused by an immune system in overdrive, which can wreak havoc on the body, causing all manner of degenerative illness from type 2 diabetes to Alzheimer's disease. But new evidence also shows that when cytokines—some of the key players in regulating the immune system—are disordered, they can also affect neurological function, causing any one of a litany of conditions we label 'mental illness'.

A major infection such as Epstein-Barr virus can cause this kind of cytokine storm, but so can allergies and the typical Western diet. Numerous studies of schizophrenics have shown that foods containing gluten or dairy can often trigger psychotic events and behaviour. Amino acids in these foods are similar to a substance called melanocyte-inhibiting factor (MIF), known to alter brain activity.

Many psychiatric patients given gluten produce a substance (leukocyte migration inhibition factor) that is similar to one produced by coeliac patients, even though the psychiatric patients don't exhibit other symptoms of gluten intolerance, such as malabsorption in the gut.

Numerous studies have shown that even severely disturbed, hospitalized patients markedly improve when dairy and gluten are eliminated from their diet, and relapse as soon as the foods are reintroduced.

Besides food allergies, numerous nutritional deficiencies such as in certain B vitamins like folate have long been known to cause psychosis.

The most well-known advocate of this approach was the late Dr Carl Pfeiffer, founder of the Brain Bio Center in Princeton, New Jersey. Dr Pfeiffer postulated that most psychotic patients have either abnormally high or low levels of histamine—the body chemical mobilized in allergic reactions—which is vital to the functioning of the nervous system. He also found that they were likely to have too much copper and deficiencies in zinc and other nutrients.

By manipulating their diet and adding supplements, Dr Pfeiffer achieved notable improvements in many patients.

More recently, we've discovered the role of sugar or a faulty microbiome in creating a brain on fire, which can be put out by cleaning up the diet and adding probiotics (see page 59), as well as other supplements.

More than 30 years ago, Drs Stephen Davies and Alan Stewart maintained that addressing nutritional imbalances, food allergies and hormonal imbalances "can... result in being able to gradually withdraw, in a controlled way, the anti-psychotic medication without relapse".

And WDDTY panel member Dr Melvyn Werbach amassed many studies in the 1990s showing that patients with clinical depression made a full recovery just by being given folic acid supplements.

All these years later, we have even more information to suggest mental illness isn't all in the head, or indeed the genes. New evidence from Kings College London shows that many cases of schizophrenia or bipolar illness are caused by environmental factors and not genes, and so are potentially reversible—something not usually told to patients suffering from a coterie of serious mental disorders.

The 'sick brain' theory justifies the medical approach to mental illness, with its armament of powerful drugs, lobotomy and electroshock. As Peter Breggin wrote many years ago in *Toxic Psychiatry*, "If irrationality isn't biological, then psychiatry loses much of its rationale for existence as a medical speciality."

That is even more true with new evidence that inflammation—increasingly seen to be the root cause of all diseases—may be the root cause of all mental illness, too.

“Many cases of schizophrenia or bipolar illness are caused by environmental factors, not genes”



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Brains on fire ⁴⁶

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'How I beat endometriosis' ⁶⁶

A holistic approach helped Laura Borghisay goodbye to her debilitating endometriosis pain

Probiotics for different gut conditions ⁵⁹

A guide to the best of these good-guy bacteria and how to get more of them

The health effects of a 'good' breakup ³⁶

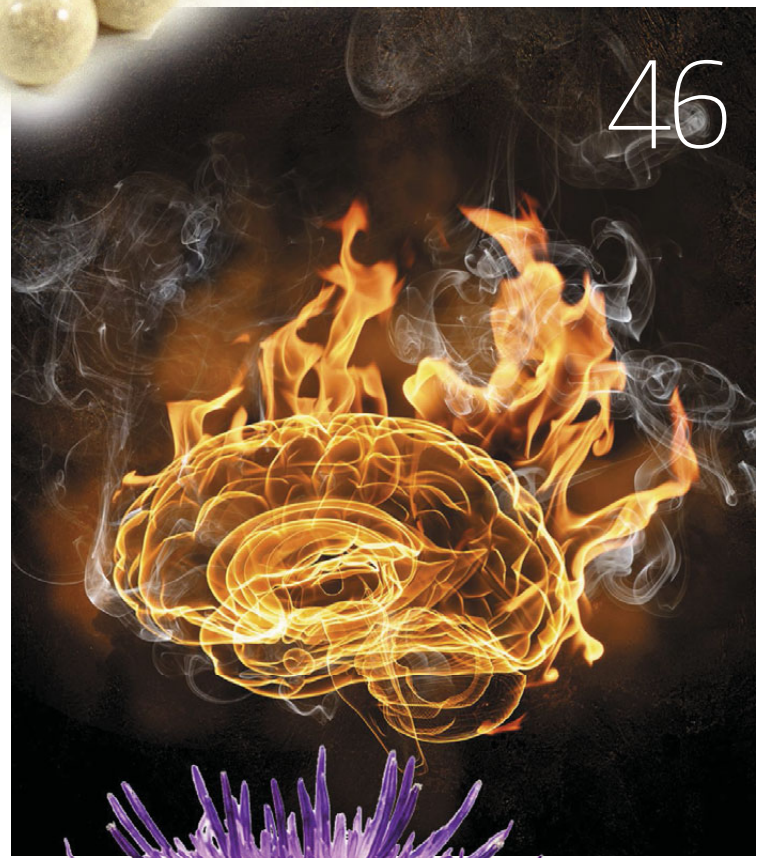
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Your views are important to us. Please contact us at:

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A review of over **50,000 high-dose IV vitamin C infusions** found only **FIVE** reported serious adverse events

Mutated BRCA 1 or 2 genes cause just **5%** of all **breast cancers**

Drinking green tea can **reduce dementia risk** by **30%**

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WHAT DOCTORS DON'T TELL YOU

Editorial Panel

What Doctors Don't Tell You is supported by some of the world's leading pioneers in nutritional, environmental and alternative medicine. Each is an authority in his or her field; many have broken new ground and inspired new practices in medicine.



Dr. Jean Monro, medical director of the Breakspear

Hospital, is an internationally recognized specialist in environmental medicine, including such conditions as chronic fatigue syndrome, Lyme disease and multiple chemical sensitivity. She is Fellow of the American Academy of Environmental Medicine and a Board Certified US examiner.



Dr. Damien Downing, whose practice specializes in

allergy, environment and nutrition, is current president of the British Society for Ecological Medicine and on the editorial board of *Orthomolecular Medicine News Service*. Chief Medical Advisor of cancer charity Yes to Life (www.yestolife.org.uk), he is also the author of numerous books, including *The Vitamin Cure for Allergies*.



Dr. Harald Gaier, arguably the UK's most knowledgeable

practitioner of the major alternative medical disciplines, is registered in the UK as an osteopath, homeopath, acupuncturist, naturopath and medical herbalist. Former director of medical research at The Hale Clinic and the Diagnostic Clinic and a committee member of the Prince of Wales' Foundation for Integrated

Health, Dr. Gaier is author of numerous scientific papers and *The Encyclopedia of Homoeopathy*.



Dr. Michel Odent, a French-trained surgeon and

obstetrician, is the foremost pioneer of the natural birth movement, emphasizing home and water birth. Founder of the Primal Health Research Centre in the UK, he has written some 50 scientific papers and 11 books, now in 21 languages.



Dr. Melvyn Werbach, trained as a psychiatrist, is an expert in

nutritional and botanical influences on illness and mental illness. He has held a faculty appointment in psychiatry at the UCLA School of Medicine, served as president of the Biofeedback Society of California in 1977, and authored numerous books, including the award-winning *Nutritional Influences on Mental Illness*.



Dr. Jonathan Wright, medical director of the

Tahoma Clinic in Renton, Washington, pioneered nutritional medicine in the US. A board member of the American Preventive Medical Association (APMA) and the International College of Advanced Longevity Medicine, he has published 11 books.



Dr. Sarah Myhill has worked in the NHS and private

practice since qualifying from the Middlesex Hospital Medical School in 1981. For 17 years she was the Honorary Secretary of the British Society for Ecological Medicine (renamed from the British Society for Allergy, Environmental and Nutritional Medicine), a medical society interested in environmental causes of disease and non-drug treatments. She helps run the Society's training courses and lectures regularly on topics such as chronic fatigue syndrome.



Janet Balaskas, who named and inspired the

Active Birth Movement in the 1970s, helped to revolutionize many maternity practices around the world. Janet is the founder and director of the Active Birth Centre in North London and the author of nine books including *Active Birth*, *Preparing for Birth with Yoga* and *Easy Exercises for Pregnancy*.



Craig Sams is co-founder of

Whole Earth Foods, a leading organic food company, and founder and President of Green & Blacks Organic Chocolate. Currently he is director of Soil Association Certification, executive chairman of Carbon Gold Ltd, a carbon

sequestration business based on the use of biochar as a soil improver, and a trustee of the Slow Food Trust UK. He is also the author of four books, including *The Little Food Book*.



Sally Bunday is founder of the the Hyperactive Children's Support

Group, the first organization to draw attention to the role of diet and nutrition, particularly the effect of food additives and essential fatty acid deficiencies, in childhood behaviour problems. The registered charity has helped thousands of families of children with attention deficit/hyperactivity issues since it started more than 30 years ago.



Understanding the risks of standing

Dear WDDTY I read your recent E-news titled 'Just standing for 30 minutes a day (instead of sitting) reduces heart attack risk'. Be careful with spreading such messages. My family and I got the opposite message: do not stand too long. Too-long periods of standing raise the risk of a heart attack. Standing is not good for everybody.

"Standing is bad and moving is good," our adviser told us. We are a family with high risk of heart attacks. My grandfather, mother, uncles and aunts died in an instant from a heart attack.

Standing for a long period was a method of committing suicide in the old days. Read your literature. There is a lot of nonsense distributed these days. Be careful not to join the health freaks and mediocre researchers.

A. Gabrielli, The Netherlands

WDDTY replies Please see page 26, where our 'Every Picture...?' section explores this research further. The study found that substituting 30 minutes of sitting down for some form of physical activity, or even just standing up, can reduce the risk of a fatal heart attack. It doesn't mention prolonged standing, which as you rightly point out, can have detrimental effects.

Swap plastic for paper

Dear WDDTY The growing problem with plastic in our society is now well documented, widely known and understood. With your publication's ethos being the wellbeing of not only our bodies but also the world in which we live from a natural health point of view, it is regrettable to still receive your magazine wrapped in a plastic covering. Could this be changed to a paper envelope instead?

This plastic option may be cheaper for you, but surely this should no longer be the main consideration.

Anne Pays, Bristol

Sciatica and sports massage

Dear WDDTY I was delighted to read Dr Mitchell Yass' article on sciatica in January's issue, as I share his forward thinking on sciatic symptoms.

I am a remedial and sports massage therapist with more than 20 years' experience treating clients with various muscular problems and sports injuries. I use deep massage and myofascial release, working on the affected muscles and lengthening and releasing congested areas.

I took early retirement from nursing to qualify in remedial and sports massage. When I was nursing, we were taught throughout training that sciatica was a symptom relating to spinal problems and not a diagnosis. But, with years of experience treating sciatica, I have come to the conclusion that this is not so.

Like Dr Yass, I have always thought that sciatica was more related to tight and congested gluteal muscles. I am able to treat sciatica with deep compression and releasing contraction to the gluteal muscles. I can feel the piriformis release gradually under deep elbow pressure along with passive hip rotation, therefore releasing the sciatic nerve in one session. I also take into consideration the quadratus lumborum and the psoas muscles, as these muscles are quite often involved in the onset of sciatica.

I have had much success with this treatment in patients with acute and chronic sciatica.

Irene Gibson, Dundee

Winning with real food

Dear WDDTY Thanks for your nutritional tips—they really help. I removed white flour and pasta, rice, cereal, and bread from my diet. I've had no doughnuts or sugary cereals in 10 years. I also quit drinking sodas and carbonated drinks.

Eating more healthily has taken time to implement. It's always easier said than done. But I reached a milestone when I ate an expensive candy bar—a gift—and it tasted like chalk! I suddenly realized my tongue actually preferred the taste of real food.

I was a sugar addict, despite being a former serious athlete, but now I prefer healthier things, flavoured with herbs and spices, rather than a quick sugar buzz. And my energy levels are much better. I also swear by yoghurt with active live cultures.

Patricia, via email

What about beetroot juice?

Dear WDDTY At the end of your article on high blood pressure in the February issue there is a list of natural ways to control blood pressure. I found it curious the list does not include beetroot juice, which is well known to lower blood pressure.

There's plenty of information on the web about it, and you can find beetroot juice, organic and non-organic, in supermarkets and health food stores. I think this ought to be mentioned.

A.R. Mears, High Wycombe



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High doses of vitamin D reduce first signs of heart disease

Hardening of the arteries—one of the signs of heart disease—can be improved in just four months by taking high doses of vitamin D, a new study has discovered.

Atherosclerosis happens when the artery walls start to narrow and harden, eventually leading to a heart attack or stroke—and medicine’s standard response is cholesterol-lowering statin drugs, or bypass or angioplasty surgery when the condition progresses.

But researchers have discovered that very high doses of vitamin D—six times more than the recommended daily allowance—are “significantly and rapidly reducing (arterial) stiffness,” says Anas Raed, lead researcher on the project from the Medical College of Georgia at Augusta University.

The 4,000-international unit (IU) dose achieved a 10 per cent reduction in arterial hardness in just four months when it was tested on a group of 70 African Americans aged between 13 and 45, who were also overweight or obese. Vitamin D levels of black people tend to be lower because darker skin absorbs less sunlight, a precursor of vitamin D.

In their experiment, the researchers tested a variety of different doses of the vitamin for 16 weeks before reassessing the stiffness of arteries. Some of the volunteers were also given a placebo, or dummy pill, instead of the vitamin.

PLoS One, 2017; 12: e0188424



‘Wrong’ flu vaccine means nobody was protected

Health agencies admit they chose the wrong flu vaccine this year. People who’ve already been vaccinated won’t be protected from the strain that caused a big leap in infections.

Public Health England sent out a letter to family doctors warning them to expect to see many cases of flu, even among those who have been vaccinated. “It is possible that flu will be seen amongst individuals, both staff and patients, who have accepted this vaccination,” the letter reads.

Most new cases of flu in the UK were of a particular strain of influenza B—the very one the vaccine didn’t protect against. UK health regulators this year opted for a trivalent vaccination, a cheaper option, which is designed to protect against one type of influenza B and two types of influenza A. But most flu cases at the end of last year and into this year have been of the type B/Yamagata variety, which the vaccine doesn’t protect against.

Even when the health agencies do get it right, the vaccines aren’t very effective. In 2016, the vaccine was effective in 41 per cent of people under 65, and yet offered no protection in those over 65—the very group that needs it most.

The ineffectiveness of the vaccine has a lot to do with the way it’s been manufactured. The manufacturing process begins with a flu virus being inserted into a chicken egg. It immediately adapts to cope with its new environment by changing slightly. This adaptation means that the vaccine produced from chicken-egg virus can’t lock into the actual virus in humans, researchers from Scripps Research Institute have discovered.

The Times, January 4, 2018; *PLoS Pathogen*, 2017; 13: e1006682

Cheers! A few mugs of green tea reduce dementia risk

Drinking plenty of green tea every day—ideally two or more cups—reduces the risk of cognitive decline and dementia.

Regular tea drinkers who consume at least two mugs a day reduce their risk of developing dementia and other cognitive disorders by around 30 per cent. The risk reduction falls to just 6 per cent among those who drink one or fewer cups of green tea a day. Similar protective effects weren't seen with black tea.

Although it's been suspected for a while that tea helps maintain cognitive abilities, researchers from Tianjin University in China decided to take a closer look and re-examined 17 studies that had tracked the cognitive abilities of 48,435 people. There was a significant reduction in the risk of cognitive impairment, decline and dementia among the tea drinkers.

It's not known exactly why green tea has this protective effect, but it does contain flavonoids, which help maintain the health of blood vessels that 'feed' the brain, along with L-theanine, which is thought to increase calmness, and caffeine, which boosts mental alertness.

In a separate study, researchers have determined that the ideal brewing time for black tea is two minutes. That's enough time to release the flavonoids—and brewing for a further two minutes doesn't make much more difference.

Oncotarget, 2017; 8: 43306–21 (green tea study); J ADAC Int, 2017; 100: 1694–9 (brewing time study)

Link between gum disease and some cancers proven

It's already been established that there's a connection between bad gum disease—known as periodontitis—and heart disease, and now new evidence suggests that people with gum problems are 24 per cent more likely to develop cancer.

The risk is a little higher—at 28 per cent—among those who have the most severe form of periodontitis and have lost all their teeth. Lung and colorectal cancers were the two most common cancers for people with bad gums, researchers at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health found.

They tracked the health of 7,466 people for more than 12 years, during which time 1,648 of them developed cancer. The researchers discovered that those with severe periodontal disease had more than double the risk of developing lung cancer compared to those with mild periodontitis or none at all. There was also a small increased risk of pancreatic cancer.

Although the researchers aren't yet sure if bacteria from bad gums cause cancer or are a by-product of the disease, one common thread seems to be smoking. Smokers are more likely to suffer from gum disease, and smoking also raises the risk for lung and colorectal disease.

Gum disease didn't seem to raise the risk for other cancers, such as breast, prostate or blood and lymphatic cancers, however.

Their findings have been supported by separate research, which found that the bacteria in gum disease have also been found in colorectal cancer tissues.

J Natl Cancer Inst, Jan 12, 2018



Canola oil can cause Alzheimer's and memory loss

Canola oil is a cheaper option to olive oil that is marketed in the US as being just as healthy—but it could be a cause of Alzheimer's disease and general mental decline as we get older, scientists have discovered.

It's one of the first times that solid evidence has been produced to dispute the health claims of the oil's manufacturers, although there have been concerns for a long while that it causes kidney, liver and neurological problems.

Now researchers from Temple University Health System have discovered that the oil encourages the formation of plaques in the brain that are associated with Alzheimer's disease and other cognitive problems

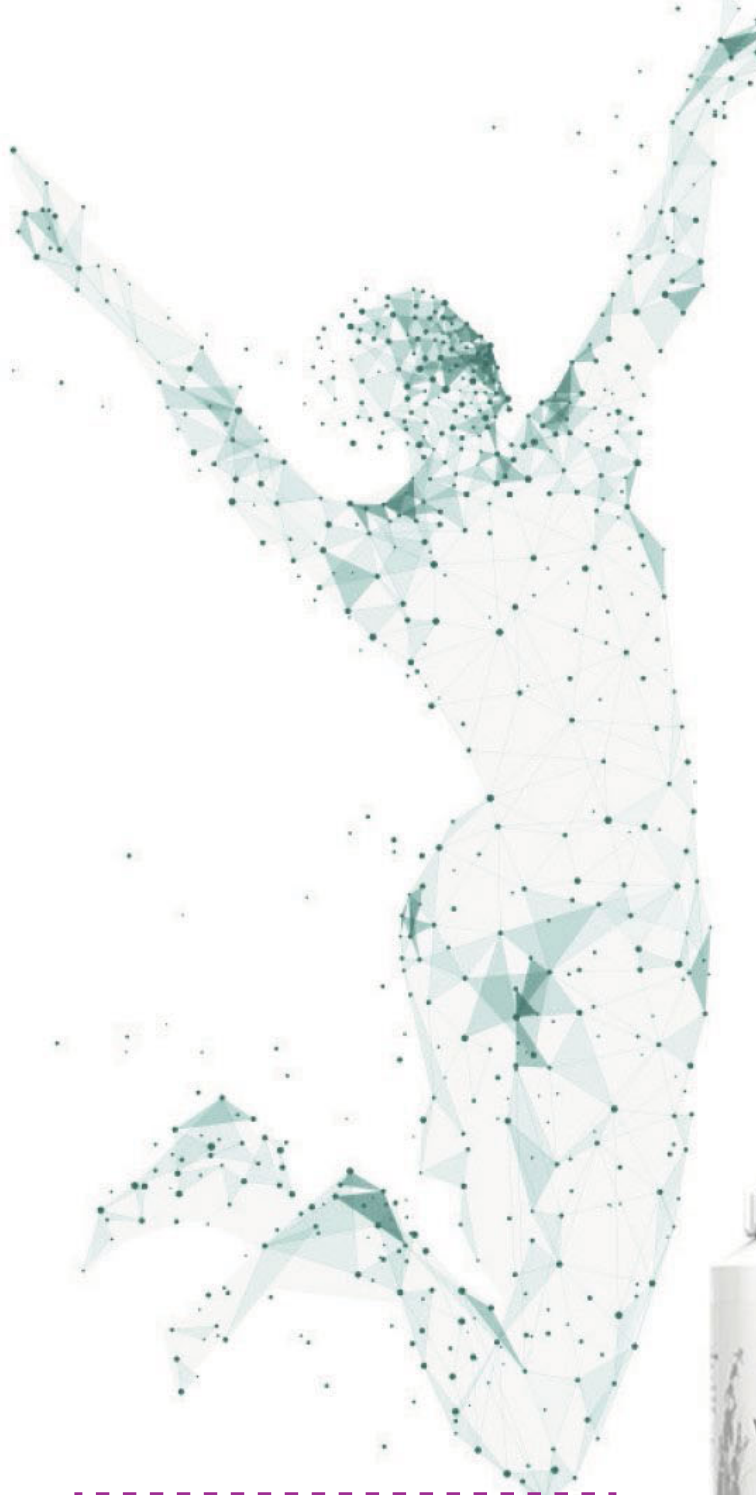
like learning difficulties and memory loss. By comparison, the same research team discovered in an earlier study that extra-virgin olive oil actually reduces the levels of plaques in the brain and helps improve memory.

For their latest study, the researchers used two groups of mice that were genetically predisposed to develop Alzheimer's: one group was fed a normal diet and the other was also given the equivalent of two tablespoons of canola oil a day.

After a year, the canola-oil group was much heavier, and they failed memory and learning tests. On examination of their brains, the researchers discovered far higher levels of plaques, which prevented neurons from communicating.

Although canola is a vegetable oil, it is typically made from genetically modified plants in the US, and is used in many packaged and processed foods. *Sci Rep, 2017; 7: 17134*





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Alternative medicine 'the same as pornography or tobacco'

Complementary and alternative medicine should be viewed in the same light as pornography, tobacco and gambling, a university professor has claimed, as they are all 'morally tainted'.

Dr Kevin Smith of Abertay University in Scotland added that he is concerned that Prince Charles—the future king of Britain—is a proponent of homeopathy. Smith has co-authored a new book, *More Harm Than Good?*, with Edzard Ernst, a former professor of complementary medicine at Exeter University who previously called the Prince a “snake oil salesman”.

In their new book, the duo accuse the Prince of putting lives at risk by advocating alternative and complementary therapies. They say that diagnostic techniques such as iridology, which they claim the Prince advocates, have no evidence of working. “Given that the evidence for iridology and other alternative diagnostic techniques is either negative or absent, why does the heir to the throne advocate using them? Does he not know that he has considerable influence and endangers the health of those who believe him?” they write.

Like his co-author, Smith is no stranger to controversy. In 2015, he argued that all 18-year-old men should have their sperm frozen in case they wanted to start a family in their 40s, when the quality of their sperm would have deteriorated and they were more likely to have a child with disabilities.

His recommendation was met with ridicule. Allan Pacey, a professor at the University of Sheffield, described it as “one of the most ridiculous suggestions I have heard in a long time.” He said that risks from older fathers were very small.

Daily Telegraph, January 18, 2018

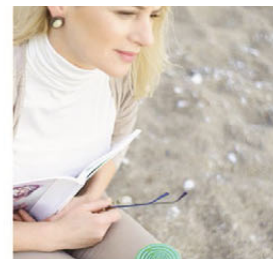
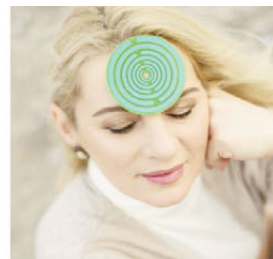
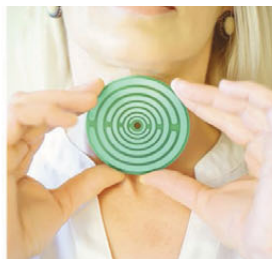


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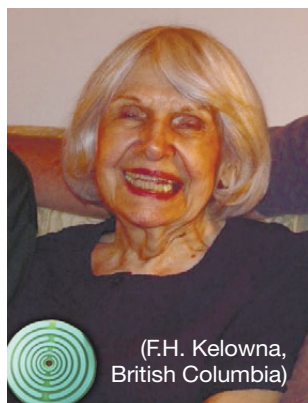


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I WAS SCEPTICAL...



(F.H. Kelowna,
British Columbia)

“I am 90 years old...an age where many people resign themselves to being in pain and discomfort. In my case I was reacting badly to prescription drugs and pain-killers. When I read about the PolarAid™ in a popular magazine I was sceptical, but decided to try it as a last resort. How fortunate for me that I did! I had been suffering for years from chronic back pain resulting from a fall. I was also suffering

from severe vertigo that sometimes made it impossible for me to leave my bed for hours. It was accompanied by many of the symptoms that people suffer during the course of a migraine attack. By using some of the recommended techniques in the video on your website, my back pain is a thing of the past, and I am able to nip vertigo in the bud at the first indication it is about to occur. I can truthfully say that these signals rarely happen anymore. I am purchasing a second disc which I hope will amplify the improvement of a circulatory

problem, and I’m hoping to buy more of them soon for family members and friends who can benefit from a gift of good health. I hope it will prove helpful to others in my age group who have resigned themselves to a painful life style. Yours sincerely...and gratefully!” (F.H. Kelowna, British Columbia)

“When I was pregnant with my daughter at the age of 30, I suffered from embolic phenomena that have since given me a tachycardia problem. I am 82 years old and in getting older this problem happened more often and lasted longer. I saw the advertisement on PolarAid™ in Good Times magazine and ordered it in February 2017. I have followed the suggestions of use since the beginning and after 10 months of use of the PolarAid™ disc, I can say that during all these months I had only 1 or 2 tachycardia quickly stopped with the application of the disc. Also, I feel energized and inspired, what pleases my entourage! I had the opportunity to offer the disc to my family and they were all very happy. My friend, a psychology doctor, ordered a PolarAid™ disc for his son who suffers from migraines and he told me that it helped him.” (A.M., Saint-Mathieu-du-Parc, Que.)



Dr. Dino Tomić currently works as a medical doctor, specializing in gynecology and obstetrics. For the past 20 years, he has explored and experimented with alternative medicines such as quantum and bioresonance medicine, homeopathy, acupuncture, and energy techniques.

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Two breakthroughs in reversing 'incurable' tinnitus

Tinnitus—a persistent ringing in the ear—is thought to be incurable, but two new technologies are being tested that could finally improve or even reverse the problem.

Both use simple earbuds that transmit messages to the brain that change the way it 'hears' sounds.

The first, a technology known as bimodal auditory-somatosensory stimulation, has been tested by researchers at the University of Michigan on a small group of tinnitus sufferers. After using the technology 20 minutes a day for 25 days, the 20 sufferers all reported a significant improvement; some said the noises they heard were 12 decibels softer, others said the noises were less harsh or piercing, and two reported their tinnitus had disappeared. None of these improvements were reported by another group of tinnitus sufferers who had been given a sham treatment.

The technology works by changing the way the brain 'hears' in a process known as long-term depression of the nerve activity that contributes to tinnitus. In healthy people, brain cells known as fusiform cells help locate where a sound comes from, but they become overactive in people with tinnitus, usually after

they have been damaged, such as when they have been exposed to loud noises.

Bimodal auditory-somatosensory stimulation plays sounds into the ear that match the frequency and volume of the whistling and rushing noise of tinnitus.

In a separate trial, researchers have been eliminating tinnitus by using neurofeedback technology that trains the brain to focus on different sounds and sensations. The basis of the technique is the understanding that there is a close relationship between 'hearing'—the way the brain picks up sounds through the primary auditory cortex—and other processes that monitor breathing or touch, for instance.

By shifting the focus, the sounds of tinnitus can be reduced or even reversed, say researchers from Wright State University in Ohio. They tested the theory on a group of 18 healthy people, who were fed 'white noise' through earplugs while an MRI scanner was monitoring their brains.

The researchers hope that neurofeedback could also be developed to help people cope with pain.

University of Michigan study: *Sci Transl Med*, 2018;10: eaal3175; Wright State University study: *Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Radiological Society of North America*, 2017



Mobile phone radiation triples miscarriage risk

Wi-Fi, other wireless devices and power lines produce non-ionizing radiation, and this seems to have "adverse biological impacts on human health," said researcher Dr De-Kun Li from the Kaiser Permanente Division of Research.

The discovery has wider implications, and it could be further support to the theory that mobile phones can cause cancer, although Dr Li said he was unable to prove this from the short-term study he carried out.

A group of 913 pregnant women carried a monitoring device for 24 hours and kept a diary of their

activity, and their pregnancy was then tracked. Around 10 per cent of the women exposed to the lowest levels of radiation miscarried—which is similar to the miscarriage rate in the general population—but the rate rose to 24 per cent among women who were exposed to the highest levels.

Because of the short time-scale of pregnancy, Dr Li said he was able to track the impact of radiation, but assessing whether or not it causes chronic problems such as cancer and autoimmune diseases would require a much longer timeframe.

Sci Rep, 2017; 7: 17541

Radiation from mobile phones and Wi-Fi dramatically increases the risk of miscarriage, a new study has discovered.

Women who are regularly exposed to the highest levels are around three times more likely to miscarry than someone whose exposure is low.

Magnetic fields from mobiles,



Scientists seek funding to research aluminium in vaccines

A group of scientists is looking to raise €550,000 through crowdfunding to investigate the potential side-effects of aluminium salts in vaccines such as the DTP (diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis) and HPV jabs.

The scientists say they want to come up with the definitive answer about aluminium's safety, as many parents suspect it is causing serious harm, while drug companies are not properly responding to their fears or carrying out thorough research.

The money will fund five research projects that will be carried out by the Cochrane Reviews team in Copenhagen, which will re-examine around 2,500 previously published studies that have looked at aluminium in vaccines. Lead researcher Christiaan Gluud said: "It's well known that there is no valid analysis of the aluminium adjuvants used in vaccines, including the HPV [the human papilloma virus vaccine, which is designed to protect against cervical cancer]. The vaccine hasn't been tested against a control group vaccinated with regular salt water."

Aluminium salts have been routinely used in vaccines for more than 80 years to improve the immune response, but

parents fear it is causing neurological problems in their children. One parent is Danish actress Lone Hertz, a member of the Fastcare group that is launching the crowdfunding project, whose son suffered brain damage after a vaccination. "It's important we give parents the best information possible so that they can make a better-informed decision," she said.

Fastcare's leader is Mette Kenfelt, whose daughter almost died soon after being given the HPV vaccine. "No scientific research has been done to evaluate the clinical trials of vaccines with the newer aluminium salts. This is incomprehensible when we have spent years being told that vaccines only contain approved and safe elements," she said.

She points out that drug companies recently spent the equivalent of UK£400,000 in Denmark promoting vaccines when some of the money could have funded research into their safety.

To support the funding, go to: <https://patientdanmark.dk/private-forces-to-raise-funds-research-into-aluminium-in-vaccines>. To read more about Fastcare, go to: www.fastcare.dk

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DRUG NEWS

Hormone contraceptives increase breast cancer risk

All forms of hormonal contraception increase a woman's risk of breast cancer—and that's also true for the 'safer' progesterone-only pill, a major new study has found.

They increase the risk by around 20 per cent on average, and some risk is still there even five years after stopping.

Women who have taken a hormone contraceptive—and this also includes non-oral devices such as the hormone-intrauterine system (IUS)—for a year or less have a 9 per cent increased risk, and the risk rises by 38 per cent among those who've used hormone contraception for more than 10 years.

Researchers from the University of Copenhagen tracked the health of 1.8 million women for nearly 11 years. During that time, 11,517 women developed breast cancer, and the researchers noted that those who were taking some form of hormonal contraceptive were more likely to do so than those who weren't using the contraceptives. The risk was just as evident among women who were taking the supposedly safer progesterone-only contraceptive.

Overall, the contraceptive was responsible for one extra case of breast cancer for every 7,690 women taking it for at least a year, and the study showed that there would be one additional case for every 1,500 women taking the Pill for five years or longer.

The one piece of good news was that the risk was relative and not absolute. That means that other factors could have played a part in the women getting the cancer—such as diet or pollution—and it couldn't be established that only the Pill was responsible.

N Engl J Med, 2017; 377: 2228–39

Those who've used hormonal contraception for a year or less have a 9% increased risk of breast cancer. The risk rises by 38% among those who've used it for more than 10 years

+38%

+9%

Blood pressure drugs raise skin cancer risk seven-fold

Some of the world's most common drugs for high blood pressure (hypertension) significantly increase the risk of skin cancer, new research has discovered.

Diuretics, or 'water pills', make skin cancer seven times more likely, especially in patients who have been taking the drugs for a long time.

The drugs contain a chemical called hydrochlorothiazide, which seems to change the skin and make it more sensitive to the sun's UV rays, say researchers at the University of Southern Denmark.

The drugs dramatically increase the risk of one kind of skin cancer, squamous cell carcinoma, which is easily treated and rarely kills, the researchers say.

It's already known that diuretics make the skin more sensitive, but the researchers were surprised to discover that they can cause skin cancer to develop, and dramatically so.

They reckon that 10 per cent of all cases of squamous cell carcinoma have been the result of the person taking a diuretic that contains hydrochlorothiazide.

Their findings were backed up by Dr Armand Coggnetta from Florida State University, who says that his patients, often with hundreds of skin cancers each, have high levels of hydrochlorothiazide in their blood. "The combination of living and residing in sunny Florida while taking hydrochlorothiazide seems to be very serious and even life-threatening for some patients," he said.

Patients who are worried should talk to their doctor about changing to another antihypertensive. Diuretics are the only type that have been linked to skin cancer, the researchers say.

J Am Acad Dermatol, Dec 4, 2017

Serious side-effects force a third of diabetics to quit drug

The side-effects of the world's most commonly prescribed diabetes drug are so severe that around a third of patients stop taking it, a new study has discovered.

Metformin, marketed as Glucophage, among other names, is designed to treat type 2 diabetes—but it often causes a range of distressing gut problems, such as diarrhoea, nausea and vomiting.

As a result, around a third of patients stop taking the medication without telling their

doctor, researchers at the University of Surrey have discovered.

Diabetics are also giving up on other drugs, although not in quite the same numbers. Around 23 per cent stop taking a sulfonylurea, such as gliclazide, which can cause a sudden drop in blood sugar causing fainting and dizziness, and 20 per cent quit pioglitazone, marketed as Actos, which has side-effects including bone pain, eyesight problems, low blood sugar and even fatal liver problems.

This could mean that many diabetics are doing nothing to treat their condition if they're not modifying their diet.

"We have known for a long time that a lot of medication prescribed for chronic diseases never actually gets taken," said lead researcher Dr Andy McGovern.

Dr McGovern and his team analyzed how 1.6 million diabetics were coping with their medication by studying clinical trials and studies.

Diabetes Obes Metab, Nov 14, 2017

Researchers downplayed safety concerns about new vaccine

Nearly 3,000 children were given a new tuberculosis (TB) vaccine after researchers had reassured parents it was safe and effective—but neither claim was true. In fact, they were based on falsified data.

Researchers from Oxford University had cherry-picked data from animal studies to give a positive spin to the new vaccine in order to win extra funding. As a result, 2,800 infants in South Africa were given the MVA85A TB vaccine when there was no evidence that it was safe.

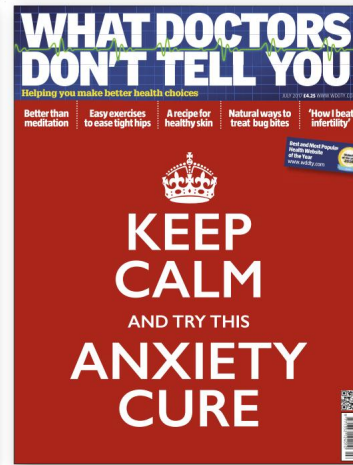
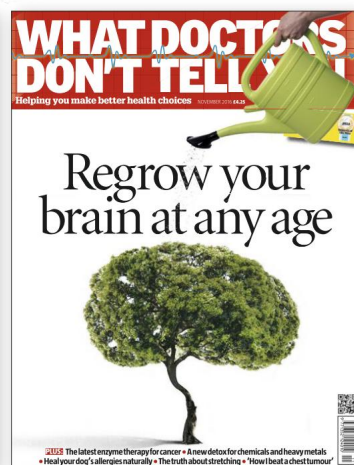
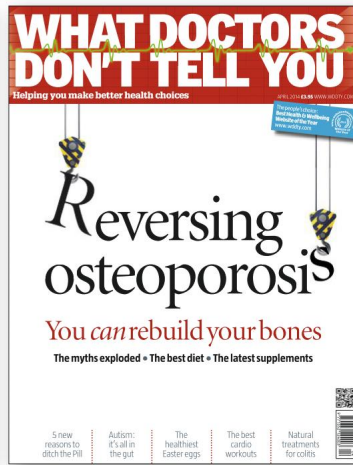
The researchers had dismissed any results from four animal studies that hadn't been positive about the new vaccine, which was designed as a booster for the standard BCG jab. The researchers were granted a further £8m (\$10.9m) funding and, in 2009, tested the vaccine on small children in South Africa.

But a 2015 review of the original trials discovered that the data had been cherry-picked; worse, it seemed the MVA85A vaccine impaired the effectiveness of the BCG. Some of the animals given the two vaccines were dying quicker, but this was not reported in the trial results.

BMJ, 2018; 360: j5845

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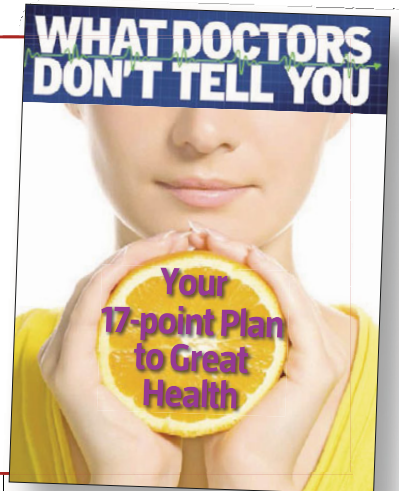
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Why Angelina jumped the gun

Film star Angelina Jolie had a double mastectomy because she had a faulty BRCA gene that increased her chances of cancer. But new research has found she could have waited

Hollywood movie star Angelina Jolie jumped the gun when she chose to have a double mastectomy after she discovered she had inherited a faulty BRCA 1 gene, a new study has discovered.

Although she had a greater risk of developing breast or ovarian cancer, she was as likely to survive her cancer as any other patient.

In fact, the survival rate is the same even between women who have a mastectomy and those who decide against surgery, say researchers at the University of Southampton in the UK. The take-home message to all women with a faulty BRCA gene is simple: Don't panic, you have time.

Jolie caused a media storm around the world in 2013 when she announced she had had a double mastectomy because she carried a faulty BRCA 1 gene, which her doctors told her increased her risk of developing breast and ovarian cancer by 87 per cent and 50 per cent, respectively (although most say the increased breast cancer risk is around 60 per cent).

By having the surgery, she said she had reduced her chances of ever getting cancer to just 5 per cent.

Jolie's mother, Marcheline Bertrand, who also had the faulty genes, died from ovarian cancer in 2007 when she was 56. Bertrand's mother and sister had also died from cancer.

Fault in our genes

Everyone has BRCA (Breast Cancer) genes, which produce proteins that help suppress tumours and repair damaged DNA. But when they are mutated, or 'faulty', they can lose their cancer-fighting abilities, making breast and ovarian cancer more likely, and it also raises the risk of prostate cancer in men.

In her *New York Times* editorial, in which she announced her decision, Jolie urged women to get checked in case they too carried the mutated genes. The 'Angelina effect' resulted in a 64 per cent increase in the number of women in the US who had a BRCA test in the first 15 days after the article was published, at a cost of \$13.8m (£10.8m), researchers from Harvard Medical School have estimated. A test that checks the genes from a blood sample costs an average of \$3,000, which is well beyond the budget of most Americans.¹

But despite the increased screening, the rate of mastectomies remained the same, suggesting that women who had no family history were nonetheless panicked into having the expensive procedure, the researchers say.

Not so common

That isn't so surprising, the Southampton researchers point out. One in 800 women carries mutated BRCA 1 or 2 genes, which cause just

5 per cent of all breast cancers—and they're not quite the death sentence that everyone thinks.

In their study, the researchers tracked the progress of 2,733 women who were no older than 40 when diagnosed with breast cancer. Of these, 12 per cent—338 women—had BRCA mutations. Rates of survival were checked at two, five and 10 years, and by the eighth year, 651 women had died from their cancer, and yet there was no difference in survival rates between women who had the faulty BRCA genes and those who didn't. This was true even for women who elected to have a double mastectomy; in other words, radical surgery didn't improve survival rates.²

BRCA mutations even seemed to have a protective effect among women with the rare, but aggressive, 'triple-negative' form of breast cancer. On average, just 77 per cent of women with triple-negative cancer are alive five years after diagnosis, compared to 93 per cent with standard breast cancer—and yet women who also had the BRCA mutation had a better prognosis at two years, although this reduced in later years.

Lead researcher Prof Diana Eccles said: "Women diagnosed with early breast cancer who carry a BRCA mutation are often offered double mastectomies soon after their diagnosis. However, our findings suggest that this surgery does not have to be immediately undertaken along with the other treatment, such as chemotherapy."

An earlier study, carried out by the independent Cochrane Collaboration, discovered something similar. They reviewed all the research on just-in-case (prophylactic) breast removal surgery—which amounted to 39 studies that involved around 7,000 women—and concluded that the science couldn't confirm that it increased survival. It may also be too much too soon—women who elect to have a mastectomy "may overestimate their breast cancer risk", the researchers observed.³

But there's more

But there's another option for women with faulty BRCA genes. As women with BRCA mutations have, on average, a 60 per cent increased risk of cancer, other factors—such as environment and lifestyle choices—could also be playing

OIC
ARD

When you know you have a faulty BRCA gene, hitting the panic button is understandable, but Angelina Jolie had more time than her doctors suggested

Breast cancer in numbers

1 in 8

women will develop breast cancer in their lifetime: that's around **12%**

1 in 800

women carries a faulty BRCA1 or 2 gene

A faulty gene *increases* breast cancer risk to between **55 and 60%**

That risk can be *reduced* by **25%** with physical activity

Just **5%** of **ALL** cases of breast cancer are caused by genes

4 out of 5

women with a mother or sister with breast cancer will **never** develop the disease themselves

If you have **one** close relative with breast cancer, your lifetime risk is **8%**; if you have **two**, the risk rises to **13%**

a part. In fact, adopting a healthier lifestyle—and especially taking up regular exercise—can reduce the chances of cancer ever developing in women with the gene mutation, say researchers from the Radboud University Medical Centre in Nijmegen, Holland.²

In a study of 270 women carrying mutated BRCA genes, the researchers found that a surprisingly high number had unhealthy lifestyles. Nearly half were physically inactive—defined as taking part in any sport less than once a week—and 40 per cent were overweight, 27 per cent smoked and 70 per cent drank alcohol. Around 40 per cent had two or more of these risk factors.

Physical activity seems to play a key role in determining whether faulty BRCA genes ever develop into cancer. Women who are active reduce their risk by 25 per cent, say researchers at the Comprehensive Cancer Center in Munich, and activity in adolescence also has a protective effect. The chances



Adopting a healthier lifestyle, especially taking up regular exercise, can reduce the chances of cancer ever developing in women with BRCA gene mutations

Encourage your OPGs

Diet, exercise . . . and controlling your menstrual cycle can all reduce your chances of developing breast cancer if you have faulty BRCA 1 or 2 genes.

There's a link between the hormones that regulate the menstrual cycle and the BRCA genes, researchers at University College London have discovered.

The genetic mutations in the genes affect organs that control the menstrual cycle, which, in turn, play an important role in the development of ovarian and breast cancers. In a study on mice, the researchers found that those with a BRCA mutation had fewer molecules in their blood that block the start of breast cancer.

Instead of having a double mastectomy, which the researchers say is a last-resort measure, women could be given a drug or supplement that encourages the generation of the molecules, known as OPGs. The OPGs block a protein known as RANKL that is a trigger for breast cancer.¹

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1 EBioMedicine, 2015; 2: 1131–9

of the cancer coming back—or of being lethal—are halved by regular exercise. Overall, breast cancer risk is “considerably influenced by physical activity, nutrition and body weight,” the researchers say.⁵

They point out that gaining more than 20 kg (44 lbs) in weight after the age of 18 doubles the risk for breast cancer—and that's true for women with and without faulty BRCA genes. Depression, a pessimistic outlook and problems coping with stress also play a part in cancer risk.

In a separate study in which they analyzed the lifestyles of 68 women with the BRCA mutation, the researchers found that, not surprisingly, smoking was another big risk factor.⁶

Other researchers are even more emphatic, claiming that all our DNA and faulty genes can be overwritten by healthier lifestyle choices. Epigenetics—the outside influences on our genes—trumps genetics every time, say researchers at the Institute for Medical Research in Belgrade. The single biggest

change agent is our diet, and especially eating bioactive foods, also known as functional foods, such as fruits, vegetables, nuts and oils (also see page 25).⁷

When you know you have a faulty BRCA gene, hitting the panic button is understandable—especially if your own mother died from her cancer—but Angelina Jolie had more time than her doctors suggested. And a double mastectomy isn't the only response: there were plenty of lifestyle changes that could have reduced her risk. But, then, her doctors never told her that.

Bryan Hubbard

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What's behind this increase in brain decline?

Our modern diet and 21st century living play a significant role. Even if it is unintentional, we can all be guilty of doing things which may damage our brain, for example, we consume too much sugar, neglect the consumption of essential fats, get inadequate sleep, experience chronic stress and do not get sufficient amounts of daily physical activity. It is important to remember that our brain is an organ which is in some way connected to everything else that is happening within our body.

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The Brain Health Programme is a nutrition and lifestyle coaching programme being delivered by qualified Nutritional Therapists.

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- **Optimising gut health:** Poor gut health increases inflammation and this is one of the features of many chronic health conditions, including cognitive decline
- **Stress reduction:** Persistently elevated levels of the stress hormone cortisol can kill brain cells and negatively affect brain function
- **Getting a good night's sleep:** During sleep our body cells detoxify and cleanse, and our brain cells are no exception
- **Exercise:** Aerobic exercise protects the brain from damage and helps to produce brand new cells within the brain. Exercise can lift mood and help with stress management
- **Brain training:** Exercising the brain is important as well! Challenging the brain allows new connections to be created and maintained

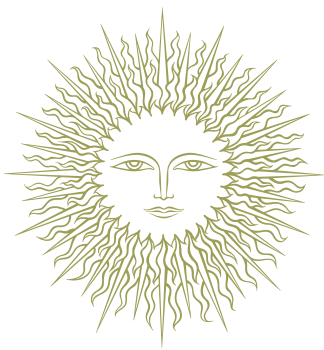
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Rob Verkerk THE POLITICS OF HEALTH

The myth of the 'faulty' gene

Mutated genes don't automatically lead to cancer, says Rob Verkerk

Robert Verkerk PhD is the executive and scientific director of the Alliance for Natural Health International, a consumer group that aims to protect our right to natural healthcare and nutrition.

For more information and to get involved, go to www.anh-europe.org, or check out ANH's Facebook and Twitter pages (www.facebook.com/ANHInternational and www.twitter.com/anhcampaign).

Angelina Jolie is the pin-up woman for an entire new industry centred around cancer prevention (see page 20). Just like Jolie, you can find out if you have mutations in one or both of the genes that most affect your chances of getting breast cancer (BRCA1 and BRCA2) and decide whether you want to undergo preventative surgery to slash your risk. If you have the 'faulty' genes, you'll consult with a new-fangled 'genetic oncologist' and may well be persuaded to kiss your breasts, ovaries and fallopian tubes goodbye.

Predictive genetic testing will inevitably become an important part of cancer risk reduction in the future. An increasing number of doctors and other practitioners in integrative or functional medicine are already using it. Knowledge of certain gene variation patterns can help a practitioner advise changes to behaviour, lifestyle, diet and exposure to environmental chemicals that can reduce the risk of disease and prioritize what modifications are most important at a given time in your life.

But it's early days, and there's a lot we don't know. One of the most important elements is trying to understand how our genes are actually expressed, not just whether we do or don't have particular variations in them. In essence, our genes 'load the gun', while our environment 'pulls the trigger'. That means you can be dealt a less-than-ideal set of genetic cards, but by controlling your behaviour, lifestyle and diet, you can quite drastically affect how those genes are used.

In January, the notion of screening the whole female population for BRCA and other genes related to breast and ovarian cancer risks was reported to be cost effective,¹ and the news was sprawled across newspapers worldwide. Public relations companies working for medical interests must have had a field day. But what should be good news,

and a major feather in the cap of the cancer prevention movement, rings some alarm bells in my mind. The approach could certainly facilitate early treatment of cancer.

But what are the long-term effects of people knowing that they, and other family members, have some or a full complement of 'faulty' cancer genes?

How do thousands of people react to being given this news? Do they act on it and remove 'at risk' body parts? Or do they plummet into depression, take to the bottle and indulge in lots of deep-fried foods and sweets to drown their sorrows?

Taking the intended 'right action' will definitely cause surgeons to start sharpening their scalpels in expectation of the droves that will be lining their waiting rooms. The

We don't know enough about the people who are carriers of the mutated genes but never contract cancer

new era of genetic medicine has the potential to become a big-money industry. It's also one that insurance companies are watching closely. Just think about how your genetic results might impact your health insurance premium.

Beyond these unsavoury possibilities, what else might health professionals do when counselling or giving advice that would really help people reduce their risk? We know lifestyle, diet and specific nutrients are strongly related to cancer incidence and prognosis, and there is a wide range of nutrients in our diet, or in supplements, that help gene repair—the very thing that is defective in people with the 'high-risk' variants of the BRCA1/2 genes.

It's a tricky juncture for medicine. Do we use our knowledge of the body's programming to simply jettison parts that might get diseased, or do we

take a much broader perspective on gene-environment interactions and give people options that don't involve drastic surgery? Is genetic medicine making a mistake by continually referring to 'high-risk' genes as 'faulty'?

As Darwin found out, Nature creates variations deliberately; some have benefits, some have disadvantages. Only rarely does it mess up so badly that the software doesn't allow the hardware of the body to function at all.

There are more than 20,000 genes in the human body, and each one has different variations. We don't know enough about the people who are carriers of the mutated genes but never contract cancer. Is it something to do with their environment, their epigenetic background, their whole deck of genetic cards or a combination of the above?

BRCA genes are no newcomers. They've been around 1.6 billion years, and they're found not just in animals but also plants and fungi. They can be affected by viruses, and recently, in evolutionary terms, they've been evolving particularly rapidly in primates, including humans.² Like so many things about our genes, we still don't know why.

The idea that genetic screening is highly accurate is flawed in my view. And don't be taken in by tags like 'precision medicine' when it comes to BRCA gene-informed double mastectomies.

There are women with BRCA mutations who don't want to lose body parts. Instead of handing themselves over to surgeons, they're making genetically well-informed changes to dietary and lifestyle patterns. Follow-up on these cohorts will be fascinating—and might give us clues that most women on the planet can really benefit from.

In the meantime, we're flying near-blind, something genetic medicine would have you ignore.

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Don't just sit there

Doing something — anything — instead of sitting in your armchair could help you live longer

Exhausted even by the thought of going to the gym or jogging around the park? Then there's good news for you couch potatoes. Well, almost: you have to substitute 30 minutes of sitting for standing, or, better yet, moderate walking or some light housework.

Doing this every day can reduce your chances of a fatal heart attack by around 22 per cent. Not a bad return for a half-hour of light, everyday activity (or even just standing), especially when the received wisdom is that you have to strain and sweat to get that sort of benefit.

The results surprised researchers at the Karolinska Institute, who had tracked the activity levels and health of a group of 1,200 adults in Sweden for nearly 15 years.

Experts have assumed that these benefits can happen only when we do high-impact or aerobic exercise, but the Karolinska researchers are among the first to demonstrate that even everyday low-impact activities can have positive effects.

The benefits do increase the more intensive the exercise, of course: 10 minutes of moderate to intense activity every day, such as a brisk walk, reduces the risk of a fatal heart attack by 22 per cent, and doing that for 30 minutes a day reduces the chances by 77 per cent.

Strangely, the same protective benefits don't seem to be there when it comes to cancer. People who do moderately intense exercise for 10 or 30 minutes a day aren't any less likely to develop cancer.

The researchers aren't sure why, but it could be that cancer has less to do with physical activity, even though their findings suggested some benefits for people who did lighter activity. Their study group was quite small, and perhaps it would take a much larger group to iron out these seeming paradoxes, the researchers add.¹

Earlier studies by the Karolinska researchers discovered that people who sit for more than 10 hours a day have a 2.5 times higher risk of early death than people who sit for less than 6.5 hours a day.

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Light activity

(an everyday activity, such as moderate walking, light housework or standing)

Moderate activity

(more strenuous activity, such as brisk walking or heavy house/garden work)

| 10 minutes a day | |
|--|--|
| <p>Reduced risk of premature death, any cause</p> <p>3%</p> | <p>Reduced risk of premature death, any cause</p> <p>6%</p> |
| <p>Reduced risk of heart death</p> <p>8%</p> | <p>Reduced risk of heart death</p> <p>22%</p> |
| <p>Reduced risk of cancer death</p> <p>4%</p> | <p>Reduced risk of cancer death</p> <p>0%</p> |
| 30 minutes a day | |
| <p>Reduced risk of premature death, any cause</p> <p>10%</p> | <p>Reduced risk of premature death, any cause</p> <p>18%</p> |
| <p>Reduced risk of heart death</p> <p>22%</p> | <p>Reduced risk of heart death</p> <p>77%</p> |
| <p>Reduced risk of cancer death</p> <p>10%</p> | <p>Reduced risk of cancer death</p> <p>0%</p> |

One of the staples of American integrative oncologists Dr Mark Stengler and Dr Paul Anderson's highly successful cancer treatments is a combination of intravenous alternative therapies. Here's a round-up of their favourite natural cancer fighters

The best alternative treatments for cancer





AS

naturopathic medical doctors, we have unique training in both conventional and holistic medicine. Between us, we have more than 40 years of clinical experience, and we consider it critically important to offer the best that integrative oncology has to offer, particularly since only bits and pieces of credible information are available.

The past 25 years have been a great age of discovery in intravenous (IV) and injection therapies for cancer. The major benefit of an injected agent is that it bypasses the digestive system and goes directly to the blood, which enables you to deliver more of that agent to the cells that need it.

In IV form, a treatment can often be given at a much higher dose than would be tolerated orally, which adds to its benefit to cancer-fighting cells. For example, in one study, urinary concentrations of vitamin C after IV injection were 140-fold higher than the highest tolerated oral doses.¹

Avoiding the digestive system is particularly important when a person is ill, as their natural digestive function may already be impaired by medications, chronic illness, cancer therapies and other factors. In these cases, an IV dose can get the necessary agents into the person without having to navigate an inefficient digestive system.

Plus, many drugs have higher potency in the blood and tissues when administered via injection. For instance, curcumin has poor absorption from the digestive tract, but infusion with pharmaceutical grade, pharmacy-prepared IV curcumin makes 100 per cent of it available for use by cells, at levels that can't be achieved via oral dosing.

Here is a sampling of the best IV treatments with the most evidence of success.

VITAMIN C

WHAT IS IT? High-dose IV vitamin C, or ascorbic acid, is metabolized to produce chemicals including hydrogen peroxide that have a drug-like effect against cancer, while also providing many positive effects to strengthen normal noncancerous cells.²

WHY IT WORKS: Research at the Riordan Clinic in Wichita, Kansas, found that a series of IV vitamin C sessions can lower the blood inflammation marker CRP by approximately 75 per cent. Other preliminary evidence shows that IV vitamin C suppresses a gene, NF- κ B, that is thought to promote tumour formation. In addition, high-dose IV vitamin C can stop new blood vessels from growing in cancer by creating an inhospitable, highly oxygenated environment.³

KEY STUDIES: In properly screened patients, it's extremely safe. A 2010 review of over 50,000 high-dose IV vitamin C infusions found only five reported serious adverse events.⁴ Another review concluded that, while high-quality evidence from randomized clinical trials was still limited, the existing evidence suggests "potentially important antitumour activity."⁵

USING IT SAFELY: Get pre-screened for multiple conditions prior to taking IV vitamin C, paying particular attention to G6PD status (an enzyme that, in the case of a genetic deficiency, impairs the body's normal processing of hydrogen peroxide). Kidney function and blood mineral status should also be monitored.

IV vitamin C also works well with conventional cancer agents, and may even have a synergistic effect.⁶

ARTESUNATE

WHAT IS IT? Artesunate is an IV medication derived from parts of the herb *Artemisia*, which is used worldwide to treat malaria.

HOW IT'S USED: Our own clinical research with more than 4,000 IV doses of artesunate has shown it to be safe in patients with advanced cancers. Since IV artesunate is the preferred treatment for severe malaria, its safety has been well established in clinical trials.⁷

KEY STUDIES: Research has shown that artesunate has a similar effect to gemcitabine (a potent chemotherapy drug), causing significant tumour regression in human pancreatic cancer cells.⁸ In other studies, artesunate could trigger tumour cell death and slow the growth of tumour-sustaining blood vessels.⁹

It also has potent anti-inflammatory and immune-calming properties, which may block triggers of cancer metastasis.¹⁰

USING IT SAFELY: In adults, IV artesunate has few side-effects when used in typical IV doses.¹²¹ Toxicity in animals and humans has sometimes been attributed to oil-based forms of injectable *Artemisia*—products that are not recommended for use in humans.¹²² It's also been shown to be safe for children.¹²³

Besides being trained in the use of IV artesunate, your doctors should watch for iron and copper depletion during therapy. With either oral or IV artesunate use, iron and blood counts need to be monitored.

HYDROGEN PEROXIDE

WHAT IS IT? Hydrogen peroxide (H₂O₂) is a chemical compound with two molecules of hydrogen to every two molecules of oxygen. It's generally used as a bleaching agent or antiseptic, but a very specific diluted version of H₂O₂ can be used for infusion under highly controlled conditions.

WHY IT WORKS: H₂O₂ has similar activity to high-dose IV vitamin C.¹²⁴ But while vitamin C generates H₂O₂ at the tissue level (which weakens many cancer cells), its production of immune messenger chemicals is tiny. H₂O₂ stimulates the immune messenger chemicals directly in the bloodstream,¹²⁵ where they travel all over the body—one reason that integrative physicians will often rotate the two therapies.

USING IT SAFELY: The doctor must use only pharmaceutical-grade, sterile, low-concentration H₂O₂, free of preservatives and stabilizers (such as those found in the topical forms). This H₂O₂ is then diluted to an even lower concentration when added to an IV bag of saline, which is slowly infused.

OZONE

WHAT IS IT? Ozone (O₃), a close cousin to the oxygen (O₂) we breathe in the air, is relatively unstable, with the ability to easily 'donate' (or lose) a single oxygen atom to become O₂.

WHY IT WORKS: The propensity of O₃ to

give away one of its oxygen atoms to another molecule to form the much more stable O₂ gives rise to many of its benefits. One study lists over 10 critical biochemical changes O₃ can make that may shift the immune system towards a more robust, balanced, output.¹²⁶

KEY STUDIES: Giving O₃ to cancer patients receiving radiation or chemotherapy enhanced the effects of treatment, lowered many common side-effects and improved quality of life.¹²⁷

USING IT SAFELY: O₃ works best as part of a well-rounded treatment approach, and one promising combination is with ultraviolet blood irradiation therapy (UVBI)—a procedure where blood is drawn from a vein and briefly exposed to high-frequency light before being injected back into the body.¹²⁸

UVBI shows promise to improve the tissue delivery of oxygen by the blood cells, which can reduce a tumour's ability to maintain its own 'local biology' and weaken its resistance to other therapies.

GLYCYRRHIZIN

WHAT IS IT? Glycyrrhizin, or glycyrrhizic acid/glycyrrhizinic acid is derived from the roots of the liquorice plant.

HOW IT'S USED: We have used IV glycyrrhizin for many years in combination therapy, and it

has helped to lower infections, improve quality of life and reduce fatigue.

KEY STUDIES: In more than a decade of clinical use we've encountered no adverse effects when glycyrrhizin is used under standard dose and administration guidelines. In one study, glycyrrhizin inhibited prostate cancer cell proliferation and lowered the potency of the remaining cancer cells. The researchers from the University of Illinois concluded that glycyrrhizin, "has therapeutic potential against prostate cancer".¹²⁹



CASE HISTORY: ABDOMINAL CANCER

Rose, a charming 84-year-old woman, was diagnosed with metastatic abdominal cancer, which was discovered when she went in for what was supposed to be a routine gall bladder surgery.

Rose's oncologist soon delivered more bad news: there wasn't any safe chemotherapy for her, and further surgery wasn't likely to be of any help either. Her primary care doctor advised Rose that it would be best to get her affairs in order because she wouldn't likely see her 85th birthday.

But Rose was no pushover. She wasn't at all happy about being told to go home and wait to die. She began to search for alternative therapies and eventually met Dr Anderson and his team in the Seattle area. Rose's individualized treatment plan began with continuing her already excellent diet and adding gentle exercise to fight fatigue and stimulate her immunity. She was also immediately started on twice-weekly high-dose intravenous vitamin C therapy for six weeks.

After the first week of treatment, Rose felt an increase in her energy levels. By week three she said, "Maybe I'm making this up, but I can eat without pain now and can eat more than before." By the fifth week, Rose reported that her digestion problems had gone away. She could eat as much as she wanted, and her energy had improved enough to garden again. By the sixth week, her energy had skyrocketed, and she was entirely free of any abdominal symptoms. Even though imaging at week 10 showed plenty of cancer in her abdomen, Rose continued to feel full of energy, and her digestion issues stayed away.

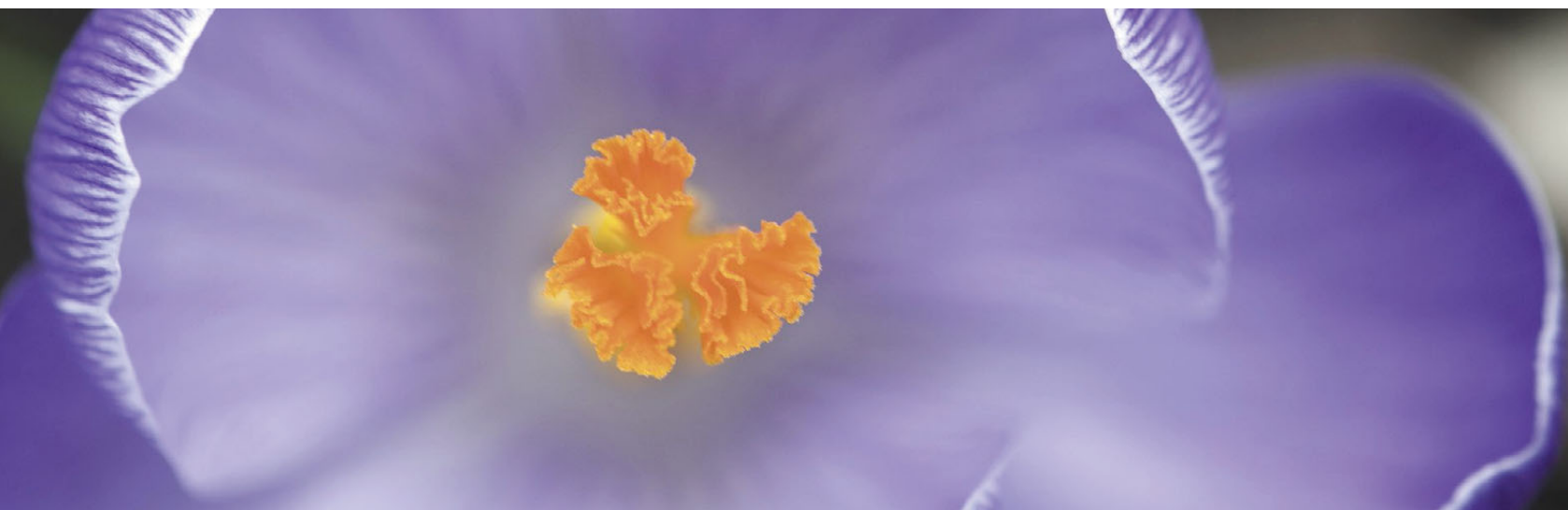
Dr Anderson slowly decreased the frequency of Rose's therapy over time, eventually placing her on a maintenance schedule of one high-dose IV vitamin C treatment every four to six weeks.

Rose is still symptom-free and recently celebrated her 92nd birthday—healthy, active, happy and free of all abdominal discomfort.

USING IT SAFELY: The most commonly reported side-effect in higher IV doses is a rise in blood pressure.¹³⁰ In our experience, at lower doses, this is unlikely, but as with any IV therapy, patients should have their blood pressure monitored before, during and after administration.

GLUTATHIONE

WHAT IS IT? Glutathione, or GSH, is one of the body's chief antioxidants, the molecules in the body that normally take a free electron or 'radical' away from a substance and stop it becoming a damaging 'free radical'.



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"I started taking Saffrosun after a friend suggested it. I took it alongside my HRT tablets before dropping them completely and relying solely on the Saffrosun. The brain fog lifted and the irritability vanished. Within 3 weeks of stopping the HRT my weight dropped by 12lb and remained fairly stable ever since. I am so happy to be able to journey through this hormonal process supported by a wholly natural product."

Thank you, Eleanor Pool

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WHY IT WORKS: Levels of GSH are lower in cancer patients, especially in those using conventional therapies like chemotherapy, radiation and surgery,²¹ which can lead to cell damage and many potential ill health effects.

KEY STUDIES: IV GSH has been used in studies and in tens of thousands of doses in our patient populations.²²

USING IT SAFELY: Although we first believed that GSH would be antagonistic to oxidant chemotherapies, such as platinum-based drugs, in two studies and in many of our patients, we have seen only synergy when given on the same day as chemotherapy.²³ Nevertheless, we generally separate the GSH from any oxidative therapy by 12 to 24 hours.

DIMETHYLSULPHOXIDE (DMSO)

WHAT IS IT: This well-known 'alternative' therapy has the unusual ability to help other small molecules pass through cell membranes and also relieves pain. Many people have used it for joint pain and other similar issues.

WHY IT WORKS: For decades, we have used IV DMSO clinically to help in pain and inflammatory conditions and to help deliver other IV therapies into the nervous system (including brain). It's also used to help control pain and improve quality of life.²⁴

KEY STUDIES: Research has shown immune system modulation,²⁵ improved healing, and improved drug delivery to the brain and into tissues with DMSO usage.

USING IT SAFELY: For years, DMSO has been safely used with magnesium and sodium bicarbonate for palliative care to help control pain and improve quality of life.

CURCUMIN

WHAT IS IT? A compound found in the popular spice turmeric, curcumin is one of the most promising IV therapies on the horizon in cancer care.

WHY IT WORKS: In his initial study, Dr Anderson found stabilization of disease progression or actual (radiologically confirmed) disease regression in five out of six stage-IV cancer patients who

were resistant to standard chemotherapy and radiation therapy, as well as natural therapies. Since then he has seen it in more patients.

KEY STUDIES: A review of over 40 scientific publications, plus Dr Anderson's own research using IV curcumin in well over 5,000 infusions, demonstrates that IV curcumin is a potentially ground-breaking therapy for people with cancer. Indeed, a patented version of curcumin is in clinical trials for approval as a cancer drug by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.²⁶

USING IT SAFELY: Curcumin is not a water-soluble product, so it requires special preparation to allow it to be infused into humans. Of the four chemically distinct forms of IV curcumin, an emulsion form of curcumin for IV use is currently the most stable and safest form for higher doses. At high doses, curcumin IV may cause short-term stress on the liver and kidneys, but is ultimately protective and restorative.²⁷ Dr Anderson has seen many patients with low kidney function recover some function after IV curcumin therapy.

SILYMARIN

WHAT IS IT? Silymarin IV compounds (such as silibinin) are a component of the milk thistle plant and a common oral supplement.

WHY IT WORKS: IV silibinin is another synergistic agent in the treatment of cancer. It is well studied as a protector of liver function, and it can be used in combination with other agents (such as curcumin and glycyrrhizin).

KEY STUDIES: It's been shown to assist in the process of cancer cell death and immune system modulation.²⁸

USING IT SAFELY: Like

CASE HISTORY: PROSTATE CANCER

John, a vibrant 70-year-old farmer, was diagnosed with prostate cancer that had spread to his spine and pelvis. John told his oncologists he didn't want chemotherapy, but he did have a goal. He was determined to see his grandson, then 9, graduate from high school.

Dr Stengler put John on an aggressive holistic program, an anticancer diet and, because of John's years of pesticide exposure on the farm, a detoxification program and herbal extracts to supercharge his overwhelmed immune system and attack the cancer.

The results were stunning. Scans six months later showed a significant decrease in John's tumours, and he reported that he felt perfectly healthy again. Two years later, John was still feeling great. Even his doctors were shocked by how well he continued to do despite still having cancer. After continuing to follow Dr Stengler's recommended protocols, John was able to attend his grandson's high school graduation nine years later.

curcumin, it is not a simple agent to make safe for IV use, but it is possible.

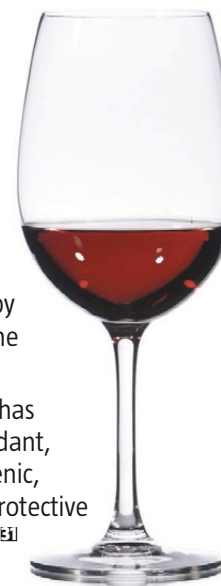
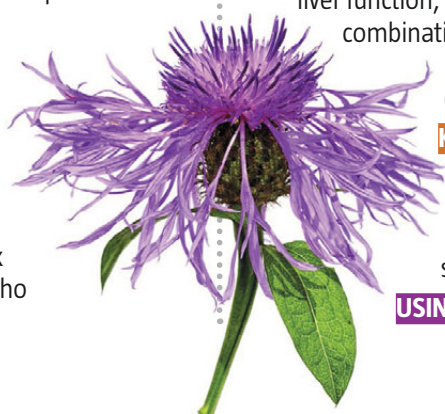
RESVERATROL

WHAT IS IT? Trans-resveratrol, a type of resveratrol, the constituent in red wine that's produced by many plants when they are stressed or under attack, has a range of effects that fight cancer when used intravenously.

WHY IT WORKS: This substance has multiple mechanisms of action for regulating immune function and balancing the oxidant-antioxidant system, with both having potential anticancer effects.²⁹

Plant-based compounds such as curcumin and silibinin show potential synergy with resveratrol. Scientists found that resveratrol and curcumin worked better in combination than alone for decreasing tumour size in an animal model of prostate cancer and that four key tumour promoter areas were "modulated to a greater extent by the combinations compared to the individual compounds".³⁰

KEY STUDIES: Trans-resveratrol "has been reported to possess antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, anticarcinogenic, antidiabetic, antiageing, cardioprotective and neuroprotective properties".³¹



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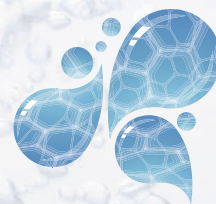


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HYDROGEN
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USING IT SAFELY: Getting enough in a human to have those cancer-fighting effects may be difficult. IV use in humans has been limited by the availability of appropriate products, but in preliminary studies, IV resveratrol was tolerated and safe.¹²²

MISTLETOE

WHAT IS IT? As a cancer therapy, the mistletoe plant was popularized about 20 years ago but has a history of use dating back many decades.



WHY IT WORKS: Mistletoe is a true immunotherapy, meaning it has multiple actions on many aspects of your immune system. It strongly affects natural killer cells, which help promote tumour cell death and reduce cancer recurrence.¹²³

KEY STUDIES: To date, there are over 2,600 published scientific papers on the ability of mistletoe to improve quality of life and stimulate the immune system to fight cancer. It can also alleviate the side-effects of chemotherapy and radiation therapy, and relieve inflammatory triggers of cancer-related fatigue.¹²⁴

USING IT SAFELY: A concern that's often raised is mistletoe's potential for interfering with conventional chemo. But a study looking at the effect of mistletoe on multiple chemotherapy drugs concluded that mistletoe did not interfere. In fact, at higher concentrations it showed an additive effect with the chemotherapy drugs to prevent tumour growth.¹²⁵

A review of the available research concluded that mistletoe therapies "seem to be beneficial for the majority of cancer patients (85 per cent) without serious side-effects".¹²⁶ A meta-analysis of 3,324 cancer patients treated with mistletoe also found a positive effect on survival, and a third review concluded that the destructive effects of cancer on the immune system "can be counteracted by treatment with extracts derived from mistletoe".¹²⁷

SALICINIUM

WHAT IS IT? Salicinium, a natural plant-based extract, is a complex sugar molecule that is harmless to normal cells in the body

but has unique anticancer properties.

WHY IT WORKS: Salicinium manipulates beta-glucosidase, a common enzyme that is very active in most cancer cells.¹²⁸ Like IV vitamin C, salicinium is damaging to cancer cells while safe for normal human cells. And as a complex sugar molecule, it can rapidly enter cancer cells due to their hunger for simple sugars.

USING IT SAFELY: We have used salicinium safely in advanced cancer patients. If used in the context of a metabolic cancer program, in combination with dietary and other therapies, salicinium can be an excellent option.

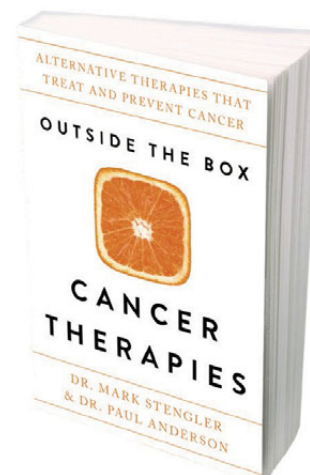
AMYGDALIN

WHAT IS IT? Amygdalin (also known as Laetrile or vitamin B17) is found in raw nuts and the pits of many fruits, particularly apricot kernels.

WHY IT WORKS: The enzyme beta-glucosidase in cancer cells converts amygdalin into hydrogen cyanide, which is toxic to cancer cells. Normal cells do not contain this enzyme in any great quantity, if at all, so cyanide is not formed in normal cells.¹²⁹

KEY STUDIES: One study from 1982 was used as the basis to show that amygdalin "is a toxic drug that is not effective as a cancer treatment",¹³⁰ a conclusion widely accepted in the US and Canada. But a more recent review publication¹³¹ demonstrated the toxicity issue is very much overstated, and amygdalin's mechanisms against cancer are broader than originally thought. Besides being a cancer cell toxin, amygdalin can promote natural programmed cancer cell death (apoptosis) and slow the growth of new blood vessels that 'feed' the tumour.

USING IT SAFELY: Dr Anderson never prescribes amygdalin alone, but uses it as part of a multi-treatment protocol. He has administered thousands of doses outside of the US, and in some cases, amygdalin has stopped or slowed an aggressive cancer.



Adapted from *Outside the Box Cancer Therapies* by Dr Mark Stengler and Dr Paul Anderson (Hay House 2018), RRP £20

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Whoever coined the phrase ‘burned in love’ knew well of which they spoke. Because the brain registers rejection in the same region that it triggers bodily pain, the early stage of a breakup is often accompanied by an increase in body temperature that can make your skin feel as if it’s on fire, with disturbing body aches and pains, a frighteningly fast or abnormal heart rate, and a flood of the stress hormones cortisol and adrenaline that can cause sleeplessness, lack of appetite and hypervigilance, as well as send your immune system plunging.¹

Contrary to our self-image of being fiercely independent and self-sufficient, the latest findings in neuroscience show that human beings are biologically and psychologically predisposed to attach in ways that make us strikingly reliant upon those we’re close to, and particularly helpless when it comes to regulating ourselves independent of one another.² For this and other reasons, the ending of a relationship can be, for some, no less traumatic than the severing of a limb, and can send us into a physical and emotional tailspin of terrifying proportions. Dr Judith Herman of Harvard Medical School, author of *Trauma and Recovery*, acknowledges the “rupture of attachment” as one of our more serious shocks, putting it on par with the death of a family member. Studies show that when in the midst of a painful breakup, our brain patterns mimic those who are undergoing the death of a loved one.³


Bad breakups are not just hard on our emotions. They’re hard on our bodies as well. Relationship expert Katherine Woodward Thomas offers three good ways to heal body, heart and soul

In a recent TED talk, Dr Helen Fisher, a biological anthropologist and senior research fellow at the Kinsey Institute at Indiana University, describes the unfortunate irony of what happens in our brains after being spurned by the one we love. The part of the brain that became activated when we first fell in love is the exact same part of the brain that becomes even more activated when we’re rejected by him or her. Rather than allow us to do the sensible thing and turn our attentions toward starting our new life, our brains are hardwired instead to actually increase our desire for the one we’re losing, keeping us torturously entangled in a frenzied and highly focused state of craving, want and longing.

Studies by Professor Semir Zeki of the Wellcome Laboratory of Neurobiology at University College London, who describes hate as “a passion that is of equal interest to love”, demonstrates how hate shares at least two brain circuits with romantic love, making us biologically predisposed to stay connected to a former partner through intense feelings of contempt and disgust, long after we’ve given the keys to the flat back.⁴

Constant fighting, either in person or through the legal system, is one way that couples stay bonded, albeit a potentially expensive one. At a time when both people desperately need emotional healing, they instead do damage by weakening their immune systems further. In her book *The Intention Experiment*, bestselling author Lynne McTaggart cites a study carried out at Ohio State University College of Medicine demonstrating that physical wounds take

Your body on a bad breakup



60 per cent longer to heal in the aftermath of a hostile and contentious argument.⁵

Dr Louis Cozolino, author of *The Neuroscience of Human Relationships: Attachment and the Developing Social Brain* and a professor at Pepperdine University, says that the brain has but one primary purpose: to ensure our survival. In the brain's world, better to create a negative bond than experience the existential death of no bond at all.

So even if we know in our heart of hearts that letting go is the right thing to do, our brains will continue ruminating, strategizing and chewing endlessly on every little slight and injury, just to stay bonded to one who may no longer care to be bonded with us.

Given all of this, it's easy to understand why so many of us behave badly at the end of love.

In his book, *Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More*

Than IQ, author Daniel Goleman explains what happens when we're hijacked by the reactive part of our brain during a life-threatening event, which the brain perceives a breakup to be. As alarm bells go off, urgent messages initiate the release of fight-

or-flight hormones that mobilize movement before rational thought. With radically impaired judgment that can render us unable to gauge consequences clearly, we're apt to act without conscience, or respond without regard to normal ethical considerations.

Consider Tania, who spends her days doing statistical research on

high-profile psychological studies at a major university. In the aftermath of her husband's affair that led him to leave her, she used her analytical mind to figure out the password to his email account and began obsessively cyber-stalking him, desperate to understand how this happened. In describing it, she says she lost any sense of an internal compass, and felt unable to manage her overwhelming emotions, which compelled her to spend hours each night at the computer reading and rereading his emails, past and present.

If you're going through a bad breakup and have been left by the one you love, you may be feeling a little overwhelmed and out of control right now, flooded with big emotions that are driving you to act out, and perhaps compelling you to self-medicate with alcohol, drugs, casual sex or binge shopping. Turn the page for my top three ways to deal with a bad breakup.

Human beings are biologically and psychologically predisposed to attach in ways that make us strikingly reliant upon those we're close to



1 Label your feelings

One way to de-escalate these difficult emotions in a healthier way is through a surprisingly simple practice: labelling your feelings.

Social psychologist Dr Matthew Lieberman of UCLA spearheaded a study in which he and his colleagues scanned the brains of 30 people while they were shown pictures of faces expressing strong emotions, such as sorrow and despair. Initially, activity in the amygdala, the part of the brain associated with fear, panic and other intense emotions, increased dramatically. Yet, when people were able to connect a word with a facial expression, such as the word 'anger' to describe an angry face, brain activity decreased significantly.¹

Dr Lieberman concludes that the ability to label our feelings "seems to dampen down the response in these basic emotional circuits of the brain. What lights up instead is the right ventrolateral prefrontal cortex, the part of the brain that controls impulses."

Apparently, the unassuming act of putting a label on each of your feelings, called 'affect labelling' by psychologists, lowers arousal and can put you back in the driver's seat of your life.

Ask yourself, "What am I feeling?" Then one by one, give each feeling a name and take a few moments to simply be present to that experience without trying to change it.

As in all trauma recovery, you'll need to tell your story—going over it again and again, laboriously trying to piece together a narrative that can weave the fragmented and ill-fitting bits of memory and information into one cohesive whole. Ruminating on all subtle clues missed and fatal mistakes made, you'll try to craft a breakup story you can live with. If you're like most, it'll be told

The goal of a conscious uncoupling is simply to be free

from a victimized perspective, and filled with the many ways you were misunderstood, mistreated, devalued or wronged. Yet, as long as you stay focused on what he or she did that was shameful, immoral or bad, you're not looking to discover the covert ways that you yourself are also responsible for what happened.

2 Reclaim your power

Here are a few questions to help you see yourself as the source of this experience in ways that can help prevent you from ever making these same mistakes again.

Ask yourself, "How did I give my power away in this relationship? What motivated me to do that? And what can I now do to reclaim it?"

Psychologists have a new term for ongoing festering resentment: Post-Traumatic Embitterment Disorder (PTED). PTED is now considered to be a severe health hazard, foreshadowing high blood pressure, a weakened immune system, cardiovascular problems and adverse changes in metabolism.

Dr Charles Raison, associate professor of psychiatry at Emory University School of Medicine, says, "The data that negative mental states cause heart problems is just stupendous. The data is just as established as smoking, and the size of the effect is the same."²

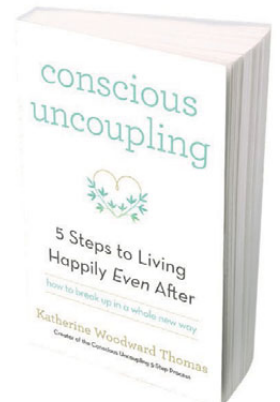
3 Practise forgiveness

Forgiveness is not so much a feeling as a decision we make from the strongest, wisest parts of ourselves. When we do, we begin to neutralize and defuse the negative situation we're in, and begin the empowering process of returning our destiny—and our health—to our own hands.³

The goal of a conscious uncoupling is not necessarily the restoration of justice, the attainment of restitution, or the vindication of being right.

The goal of a conscious uncoupling is simply to be free.

And that, my friend, is good for your body.



Katherine Woodward Thomas, a licensed marriage therapist and *New York Times* bestselling author of *Conscious Uncoupling: 5 Steps to Living Happily Even After*, is the creator of the conscious uncoupling process that inspired the highly constructive breakup of Gwyneth Paltrow and Chris Martin. For more information about her programmes, visit: www.KatherineWoodwardThomas.com

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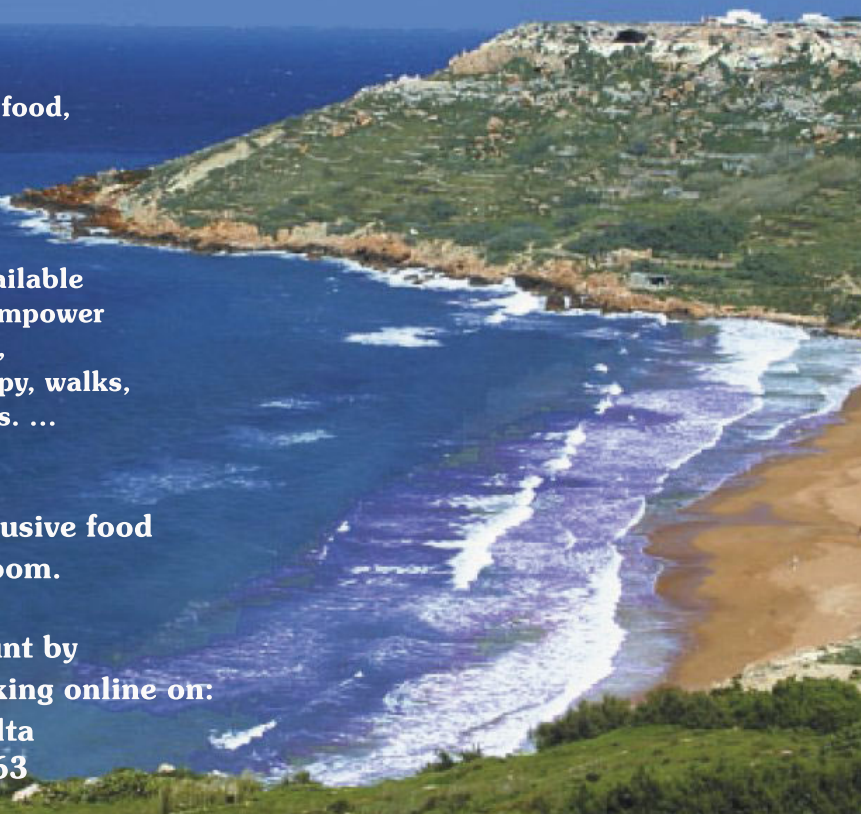
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Walking tall

Walking correctly is a complex move that makes use of muscles throughout our legs, emanating from our spine and even our feet. Charlotte Watts offers some tips on how to improve your gait

Walking is our main form of transport, yet many feel at odds with this most natural

of human movements. Our body and psyche evolved with our progression to full bipedalism—standing upright on two legs—to utilize the connection between our large front brains and dexterous hands.

The modern gym mentality where we live mostly sedentary lives and then suddenly shift to vigorous action jars with optimal body function; it's our nature to keep moving about ('spontaneous daily activity') throughout the day.

The lymphatic system does not have a pump like the circulatory system, and relies on walking for immune system regulation. The pelvis is designed to move in harmony with our chest and ribs; walking in an easy rhythm frees the diaphragm, encouraging slow breath patterns and preventing digestive and pelvic conditions.



Walking gait

There are many distinctions for what are referred to as 'abnormal gaits' such as waddling, high-stepping and the 'Charlie Chaplin', and these can be evaluated by an osteopath, physiotherapist or movement specialist, as there may be deeper structural issues. Outside of these deeper issues, there is the subtler approach of noticing our regular and habitual movement, and learning how unlocking patterns of tension can help us move freely and support internal actions such as the movement of the digestive tract, known as peristalsis.

Our natural gait is the walking motion we use instinctively. Unlike running, it always retains one foot on the ground. We spend about 80 per cent of the time we move on one leg, while during the other 20 per cent, both feet have ground contact. Each leg alternates between the Stance Phase, when the foot remains in contact with the ground, and the Swing Phase, when it does not.

“ The modern gym mentality where we live mostly sedentary lives and then suddenly shift to vigorous action jars with optimal body function ”

When walking gait is at its most fluid, it is efficient, and we barely notice the effort made. The involuntary movement from the fascial 'slings' that provide upward support—such as the insteps and pelvic floor—store and release kinetic (movement) energy that distributes any strain through the entire system. In a gait with tension or interruption, this strain manifests as loading on the joints and even inflammation or transferred pain.

Stance Phase

The Stance Phase of walking makes up about 60 per cent of the gait cycle. By breaking down the Stance Phase into separate events (see diagram, page 43), we can slow it down (such as in a walking meditation) to notice the unfolding of the motion and our tendencies and differences on each foot, to foster

awareness of our gait and conscious range of motion in the feet:

- **Initial contact or heel strike:** ankle, knee and hip joints fold in response.
- **Loading response or foot flat:** moving onto the whole foot, we 'load', where the downward action gathers energy ready for forward propulsion; the weight is transferred onto that leg. A healthy instep allows for optimal weight bearing, shock-absorption and forward motion here.
- **Mid-stance:** alignment and balancing of body weight occurs.
- **Terminal stance or heel-off:** the heel lifts, whilst toes are still in contact with the ground.
- **Pre-swing or toe-off:** the toe of the reference foot rises and swings in the air. This marks the beginning of the swing phase of the gait cycle.

Swing Phase

This phase, occupying the remaining 40 per cent of the gait cycle, has just three stages, the initial, mid and terminal swing, where the free foot moves forward off the ground, ready to take the next step. An easy swinging motion here can determine the flow-through quality of the next step through the whole foot.



Far infrared saunas for health

Published studies in recent years have highlighted the benefits of taking regular saunas. A study from Loughborough University showed how exposing the body to heat for 60 min periods, burns calories and helps regulate blood sugar levels. Finnish studies highlighted benefits to the cardiovascular system and blood pressure. Australian studies showed benefits to the immune system and prevention of colds. Canadian research pinpointed sweating as an effective means of detoxing cells. American studies endorsed heat in pain management.

The far infrared saunas are also popular with sufferers of fibromyalgia and ME, who benefit from the deep thermal energy which is similar to sunlight but without the UV rays. Lady Gaga recently posted how a FIR sauna was helping her to manage fibro symptoms.



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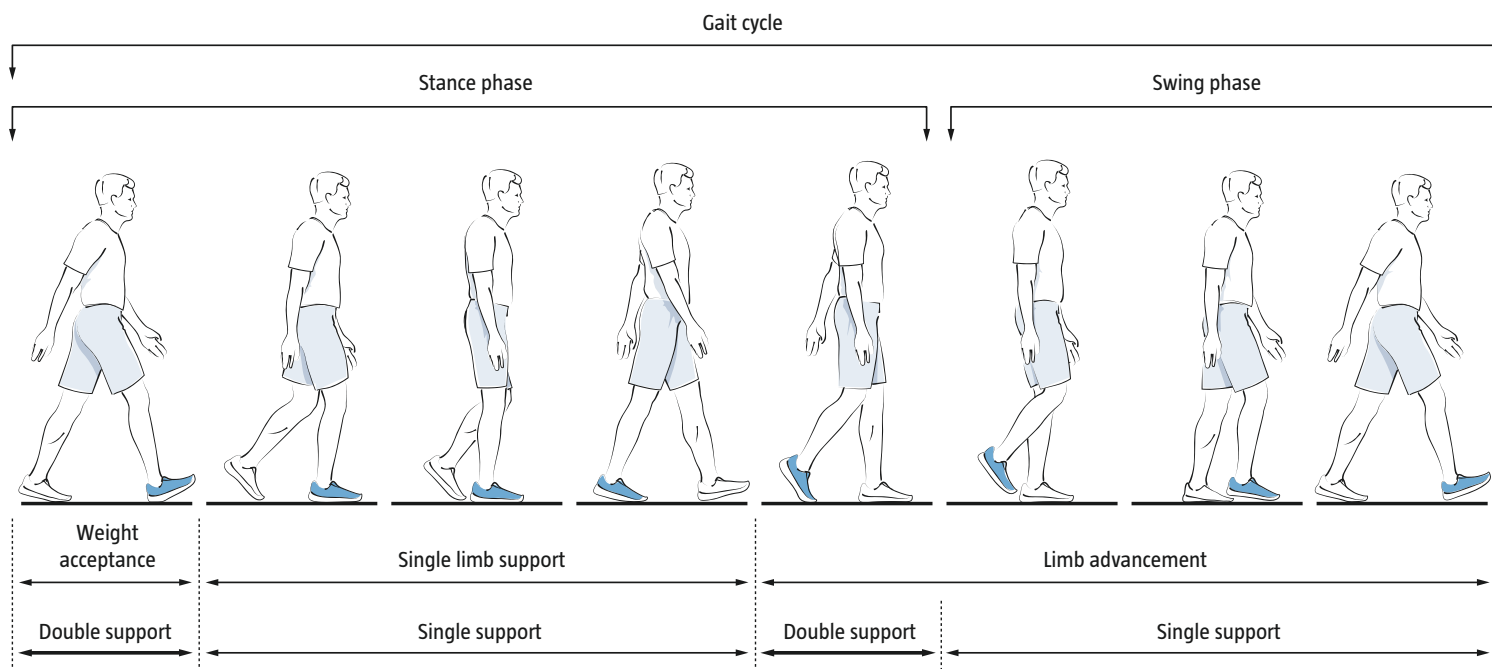
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Breaking down the gait cycle: Walking gait involves the Stance Phase (60 per cent) and the Swing Phase (40 per cent). The Stance Phase includes initial contact (heel strike), loading response (foot flat), alignment, then the heel and toe lifting. The Swing Phase is when the free foot moves forward off the ground, ready to take the next step

Noticing patterns

After breaking down the gait, we need to integrate it, to feel our movement as a whole. Noticing such patterns can help us learn new ones. We can see in the diagram on page 45 that:

Normal gait moves the opposite arm and leg in tandem to provide swing for ease of movement.

Bound gait is held at the torso, meaning the legs need to drive the motion and there is less natural massage around the abdomen. This is possibly from a tight psoas muscle (see below) or diaphragmatic tightness, so may come with shallow breathing.

Held is similar to 'bound', but the torso restriction is governed more by pinning the arms to the body.

Anti-normal is where the same arm and leg move to take a stride, thus turning the whole body as one unit, rather than twisting across the torso.

From a biomechanical standpoint, the legs appear to drive the spine, but this comes from a general approach to the body as a mechanical object,

as if articulated like a doll. This may be true if we were a walking skeleton, but in reality, all body parts move together via the fascia (a web of connective tissue).

Newer approaches (such as The Alexander Technique and Primal Movement) have shown that the spine also drives the legs, and the spine moves in the same walking motion on the sitting bones as it does on the legs.

The sitting bones are the 'heels of the spine', and you can 'walk' on them, inching yourself forward around a room, to free up the walking motion through the spine.

Standing up from the ground

The psoas muscle allows us to stand upright and is located deep within the front hip joint and lower spine. It is part of our central body support, stabilizes the lumbar spine and is used in hip rotation and walking.

Also known as the iliopsoas complex (comprising the psoas major and the iliacus), it is

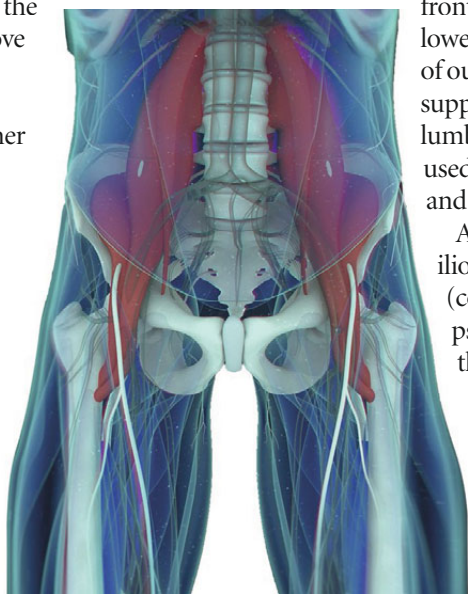
The psoas muscle, located deep within the front hip joint and lower spine, allows us to stand upright

the only muscle to join the legs to the spine and works with the diaphragm like a hydraulic pump—particularly as we walk—to massage the viscera, stimulate the flow of fluids and allow the diaphragm to move to breathe fully. When it is tight, we can hunch over and pronate the feet; collapsing the insteps inwards in what is known as 'flat feet'.

The psoas is often referred to as our 'emotional muscle' as it is from here that we curl inwards for self-protection. When stressed, it contracts, and with habitual chair-sitting (which also flexes the legs towards the torso), it tends to be tight in modern humans. This affects walking greatly, as it is then difficult to stand fully upright, to swing the legs forward easily and feel a sense of 'bounce' in our stride.

Psoas release

Constructive Rest Position (CRP) allows the psoas muscle to fully release, particularly the psoas major—the main muscle of walking and where the body readily stores trauma. When the psoas is released, we feel that we can walk from further up into the spine, rather than driven from the fronts of the thighs. Adapted from Mabel Todd and Lulu Sweigard's somatic work in the 1930s, psoas release is now widely used as a 'reset'; returning the spine to its natural shape and the psoas to a neutral position.



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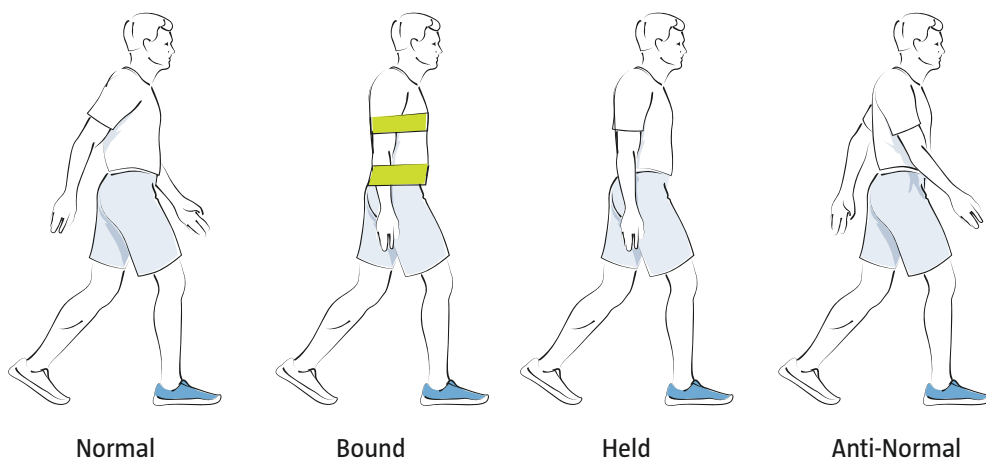
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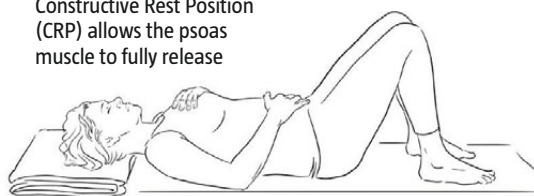


Watch your step: Normal gait moves the opposite arm and leg in tandem; bound gait is held at the torso; held gait involves pinning the arms to the body; anti-normal is where the same arm and leg move to take a stride

It is best held for 15 minutes, where we can tune into the breath or use a guided meditation like a body scan.

Laying with the skull supported so the head is not tipping back, place the feet far away enough from the bottom that you feel equal weight between the balls of the feet and heels; where the back and thighs don't need to engage to hold you in place. If you feel any pinching in the lower back, or the knees want to drop outwards, walk the feet out wider and turn the toes in to drop the thighs towards each other. Find the arm and hand placement that is most reassuring and softening (see below).

Constructive Rest Position (CRP) allows the psoas muscle to fully release



Foot health

We walk from our feet, and the mobility of their joints, fascia and muscles can determine how easily we move. Little natural walking, modern shoes (especially high heels) and man-made surfaces contort the foot's natural shape. Over time, the complex architecture of the feet can become hardened and rigid.

The ankle joint and transverse tarsal joint (just below the ankle, up into the foot above the back of the instep), are where most articulation ideally occurs, but this motion requires fluidity in the fascia all through the foot—every part affects every other. Ankles are designed to quickly absorb force as part of ground stability, then quickly shift and stabilize

weight for the next movement, which happens faster than thought.

We can support pliability throughout the ankle and foot that can ripple up into our walking gait in many ways:

Rotating the ankles fully, in one direction and then the other, regularly helps keep 'healthy slide-and-glide' throughout the foot architecture. You can do this while sitting at a desk, where taking shoes off as often as possible helps feet spread and breathe, particularly if sitting for long periods of time.

Pointing and flexing the feet (flexion draws the foot towards the shin) also helps us retain this other natural range of foot motion. Squeezing the toes together as we point encourages the opening of the top foot and flexibility of the skin there; those with trauma may feel tight across the top of the foot as a place that instantly tenses, ready to propel us forward in protective fight-or-flight mode; this area may need fascial release massage. Flexing the foot, we can open out the toes for space between them that creates expanse in those areas where shoes can constrict.

Lying down with legs straight (feet about hip-width apart) and alternately pointing and flexing the feet—with little bending at the knee—creates an 'upslide-downslide' motion of the hips that replicates the pelvic motion of walking and awareness of how this can also create movement through the shoulders and neck (see diagram, page 43).

While standing, roll each foot on a spiky ball to feel the effects of how we rise up from the instep, through the inner legs to the psoas muscle (see below) and up through the spine. We may feel this fascial release as 'volume' up through the central

body and more freedom as we move.

Massage that frees adhesions and tightness in foot tissues has beneficial effects up through all the platforms we rely on to stand, up from the knees to the hips, shoulders and base of the skull. Tension lower down can translate into compensation above that creates disharmony in our gait. Simply self-massaging the feet can help, but fascial release, Roling or Structural Integration work may unravel deeper patterns ingrained in how we travel through life.

Unlock your natural swing

When we effortlessly walk and swing our arms with our stride, we are occupying the lines of our fascia that spiral within the torso and allow us to twist and turn. These meet the erector spinae muscles holding us up through the spine and the abdominal fascia drawing us up through the front body. This allows us to shift our posture, rotate and compensate for any weight changes continually, while lifting upright from the ground. When we walk, forces are transferred from one sacroiliac joint (where the lumbar spine meets the pelvis) to the other side, and if our spiral lines are free, this can feel less jarring in the lower back and digestive organs.

Swinging the arms (see diagram, page 43): allow the arms to swing around the midline of the body, feeling the movement come from the belly, so the hands feel like weights at the end of rope-like arms. Twist through the tissues of the torso and simply feel that motion, knees kept soft so that we are not pulling through them and still feeling our roots down to the feet.

Walk on uneven ground as often as possible; get out into nature or onto the grass in a park.

Wear a rucksack rather than shoulder bag to free the arms and how they can move evenly across the shoulders and back.

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A stylized illustration of a human head in profile, facing right. The brain area is filled with bright orange and yellow flames. The background features a grey brain silhouette with various icons: a gear, a group of three people, and a circuit board pattern. Dotted lines connect these elements to the main head silhouette. Two black teardrop shapes are positioned above the main title.

Brains on fire

The psychological effects of inflammation overload



T

he last time Ali Zeck tried to kill herself, she was in a mental hospital. The antidepressants weren't working, nor were any of the psychiatric drugs she had been taking in various strengths and combinations for nearly

25 years. Diagnosed with an eating disorder in her early 20s, Ali was hospitalized for a few days and sent home with her first prescription, which she was told she'd need for life.

For the next decade, her life was "a daily struggle" with depression and anxiety, swallowing cocktails of pills from a bevy of doctors, and riding a wild rollercoaster of hypermania and dark depression that was eventually diagnosed as bipolar disorder.

It was a ride Ali barely survived, sometimes crying for hours or days at a time, drinking wine at 10:30 in the morning to "come down" from the hyper-stimulating effect of her drugs and obsessively picking at her skin until she had a serious, marring infection. Her psychotic breaks with reality and suicide attempts had her in and out of psychiatric wards in a downward spiral.

It was in this state, 45 years old and pondering suicide again, that Ali found herself in the Manhattan office of psychiatrist Kelly Brogan, author of *A Mind of Your Own* and one of a small cadre of doctors who doesn't view mental illness as a 'chemical imbalance in the brain' or a permanent brain disorder, but as a whole-body or systemic disease characterized by a wildfire of inflammation.

The 'inflammatory model of mental illness', as it is sometimes called, has been around for more than two decades, but has become the subject of recent renewed interest. It's the idea that mental illness, from depression to schizophrenia, is linked to a hyperactive immune system gone awry, leading to psychological symptoms but also to myriad physical problems routinely dismissed as 'coincidental' or unrelated.

The inflammatory model of mental illness recognizes that the rash on your face, or your irritable bowel or heart condition, does indeed have something to do with your mood and mental stability. These symptoms are all evidence of an immune system in a chronic state of hyperactivity, either reacting to a stimulus or engaged in an autoimmune attack on the body, or both.

Inflammation is the immune system's natural response when defending us against invaders such as foreign bacteria and viruses or toxins in pollution or drugs, and the immune system also launches an inflammatory response when we are injured—the redness, swelling and warmth we experience are the result of immune

cells rushing in to eradicate threats and assist repair.

However, when our immune system is hyper-stimulated or chronically activated, it can cause trouble. As a very sophisticated defence mechanism, a misfiring immune system can do a lot of damage. Chronic inflammation is a key player behind atherosclerosis¹ and the driving force behind autoimmune diseases from type 2 diabetes to multiple sclerosis.² People with chronic inflammatory diseases such as colitis also have a higher risk of mutations that cause cancer. A 2015 study from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology found that exposure to DNA-damaging chemicals after a bout of inflammation boosts cancer-causing mutations even more.³

The immune system and your brain

While inflammation is a known culprit in other diseases, it has taken doctors longer to consider its role in mental health, but research is beginning to accumulate.

A review published this year confirmed that key immune system regulators—proteins called cytokines that drive inflammation—also impact neurological function and are altered in patients with depression.⁴

Earlier studies found that nearly half of patients receiving cytokine treatment for hepatitis also developed depression.⁵ And those cytokines increase and decrease with the severity of depression.⁶

Another 2016 review of 114 studies looking at schizophrenia, bipolar disorder and depression found that inflammatory cytokines were similarly disordered in all these conditions.⁷

And two recent studies have linked childhood obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD) to elevated blood cytokine levels.⁸

A wave of new research suggests that mental illness, like much disease, is the result of inflammation. Celeste McGovern investigates how to douse an immune system fire to cure depression, anxiety, obsessive compulsion and more

Slipping upstairs

In 2017, researchers at Boston Children's Hospital discovered how inflammation could be impacting brain function when they studied mouse models of lupus, in which the body mistakenly attacks its own organs. This autoimmune condition has symptoms of fatigue, joint and muscle pain and skin rashes—as well as neuropsychiatric symptoms including headaches, depression, anxiety and even seizures in about three-quarters of sufferers.

In lupus, white blood cells release a cytokine called interferon-alpha, which acts like an immune system general, calling other commandoes into play in a sustained assault.

The Boston researchers discovered that interferon-alpha crossed the blood-brain barrier, where it triggered microglia—the immune defence cells of the nervous system—to attack the junctions between nerve cells in the brain.

"We've found a mechanism that directly links inflammation to mental illness," said lead researcher Michael

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Carroll. “This discovery has huge implications for a range of central nervous system diseases.”¹²

Just how these immune system combatants get into the brain is still not clear, but in 2015, researchers at the University of Virginia discovered an entire network of previously undiscovered vessels connecting the brain to the immune system, which could be their conduit.¹³

Why chronic inflammation?

The idea that infection may lead to mental illness has been around for a long time. American psychiatrist Henry Cotton was so convinced of it in the early 20th century that he removed his patients’ infected teeth hoping to cure them, and if that didn’t work, he tried surgically extracting other potential culprits including tonsils, ovaries and testicles.

That approach eventually fell out of fashion, but it has been well established that certain infections can lead to neurological and inflammatory conditions.

Latent or chronic infection can keep the immune system stoked, and infections such as Epstein-Barr virus and cytomegalovirus have been implicated as hidden causes of inflammatory neurological diseases such as multiple sclerosis.¹⁴

A ground-breaking 2017 study by researchers at University College London and Bart’s and the London School of Medicine found that contrary to the belief that once an infection is ‘over’ the immune system reverts back to its previous state, in fact, healthy volunteers injected with a killed *E. coli* bacteria had alterations in some immune system markers weeks after their symptoms had passed.¹⁵

In other words, having an infection alters your immune system in a lasting way that sets it up for a different inflammatory response to each further infection.

Asked how the experimental infection differed from vaccination, one of the study authors, David Gilroy, says, “they don’t—they’re identical.”

This raises serious questions about our understanding of the effects of repeatedly prodding our immune system with dozens of childhood vaccinations, booster shots and annual flu vaccines.

A 2015 review of the medical literature looked at the evidence linking vaccination with adverse psychiatric symptoms and outlined many mechanisms by which it can augment inflammatory responses linked to mental illness.¹⁶

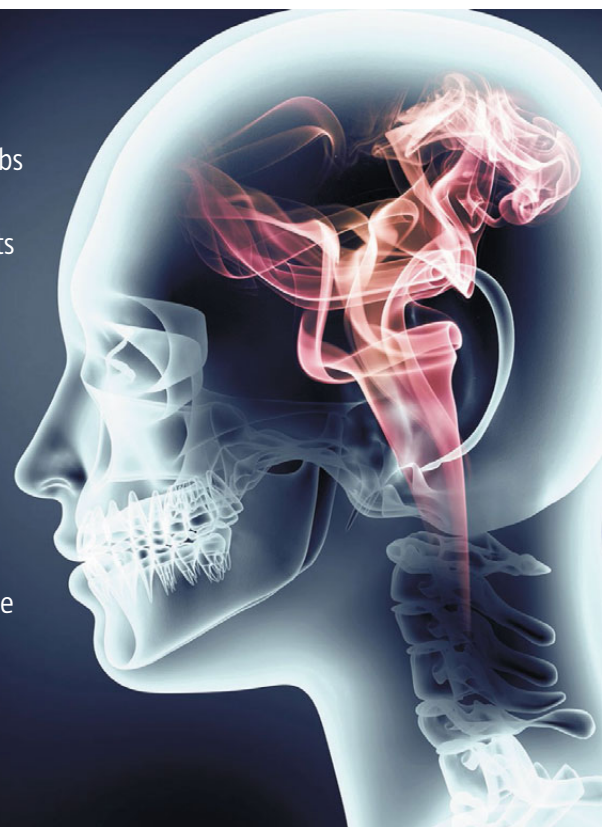
Food fire

Another recent study found that a standard Western diet may provoke the immune system’s inflammatory response just like an infection, making it hyper-responsive to inflammation triggers.

The German research team found that mice fed an unhealthy diet showed an acute inflammation response and activation of inflammatory genes. What’s more,

Healing a fevered brain

- Eliminate sugar, refined carbs and grains
- Increase levels of natural fats
- To tackle anxiety and depression and regulate stress hormones, exercise, meditate and do yoga
- Take natural anti-inflammatories like polyunsaturated fats (evening primrose oil and fish oil), curcumin (the active component of the spice turmeric), and probiotics for their general anti-inflammatory effects.



Having an infection alters your immune system in a lasting way that sets it up for a different inflammatory response to each further infection

even though the inflammation died down when they were placed back on their normal diet, returning to the healthier diet failed to reverse the changes in their innate immune system, and many of the genes that had been activated stayed active.¹⁷

Brain on fire

Repeated infections, injections and long-term assaults are to the immune system like a match to dry grass, but once activated, our immune system doesn’t distinguish between different kinds of stressors to keep the inflammation going. Environmental toxins, certain foods, sleep deprivation or even physical abuse or trauma can keep the immune response smoldering and flaring for weeks, months or years.

Some patients like Ali even describe their worst mental breaks in terms of an inferno. “It would be like my brain was on fire,” she recalls. “I would pass out from sheer exhaustion. I would be up at three, four in the morning, unable to sleep... but then my brain would be on the second my eyes would open.”

Ali and her doctors noted that her symptoms would flare as she approached her menstrual period. “The brain is the ultimate master of hormonal response cycles, and bodily inflammation can influence brain reactivity, leading to further hormonal disarray,” says psychiatrist Brogan, who treated Ali.

Ali also noticed that her mental state would deteriorate after certain foods like pizza, pasta or sugary foods. Sugar can wreak havoc on hormones, causing insulin spikes followed by a crash—and this, in turn, impacts the brain. So Brogan encouraged Ali to follow a strict anti-inflammatory diet, beginning

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Eating probiotic foods can restore the gut ecology and help to balance the complicated relationship between the immune system, gut, hormones and brain

with eliminating all sugar, gluten and dairy, which can provoke inflammatory immune reactions, along with processed foods (which are almost always packed with inflammation-causing rancid or partially hydrogenated oils like sunflower and other vegetable oils, chemicals and hidden sugars).

“I recommend a diet that controls for glycaemic fluctuations through elimination of refined carbs and grains, and through high levels of natural fats to push the body to relearn how to use fats for fuel,” says Brogan. “This is the brain’s preferred source.”

Much of the immune system is housed in the gut, especially in the microbes there, which “train” the immune system and help to rebalance it if it is out of whack. Eating probiotic foods such as sauerkraut, which is teeming with healthful bacteria, can restore the gut ecology and help to balance the complicated relationship between the immune system, gut, hormones and brain.

Ali embraced this diet wholeheartedly and made some lifestyle changes recommended by Brogan, including dry skin brushing to encourage lymph drainage and coffee enemas to support her liver. She began daily meditation, listening to a 20-minute guided meditation. Mind–body therapies like yoga, tai chi, qigong or meditation have been shown to enhance genomic expression of anti-inflammatory genes and suppress gene expression linked to inflammation.^{1B}

Ali started the practice of kundalini yoga, which she found helpful for alleviating panic attacks. She also used the Emotional Freedom Technique of tapping on acupuncture points to help let go of past resentments and curb panic attacks.

The changes were not immediate, but within a few months of following an anti-inflammatory diet and lifestyle, Ali noticed that she was increasingly “level”, “grounded” and “at peace”. She no longer requires medication to sleep and is free of all psychiatric medications.

Ali was also able to change the fate of her daughter who, at age 20, had recently been prescribed bipolar medication. She taught her the same tools she had used, and her daughter was able to heal without the drugs. “We have the ability not only to heal ourselves but also the next generation,” Ali says. “We have the ability to tell them, ‘Look, there’s a different way you can do this.’”



Inflammation-lowering supplements

Ali’s journey was written up as a case study.^{1B} Her supplements, which included natural glandular extracts, were tailored to her hormone test results, which confirmed a previous diagnosis of polycystic ovarian syndrome (PCOS) and hypothyroidism, plus general mild inflammation. These supplements included:

To support detoxing:

Chlorella

Dosage: 1800 mg, 2×/day for 20 days

Sodium alginate

Dosage: 400 mg, 2× daily

To support the nervous system:

Liver beef natural glandular

Dosage: 500 mg, 2× daily

Potassium magnesium

Dosage: 70 mg magnesium, 99 mg potassium daily

Adrenal medulla natural glandular

Dosage: 100 mg daily

Omega 3-6-9 oil

Dosage: 1 tablespoon 3× per week

Hypothalamus natural glandular

Dosage: 500 mg, 2× daily

Gamma-aminobutyric acid (GABA)

The chief inhibitory neurotransmitter in the central nervous system, GABA reduces neuronal excitability
Dosage: 2 to 4 capsules (100 mg/capsule) as needed for anxiety

Theanine

An amino acid precursor of L-glutamate and L-glutamine derived from green tea, theanine may have a relaxing effect and promote immune system balancing

Dosage: 200 mg, 2× daily

To support digestion:

Digestive enzymes

These included betaine, glutamic HCl and pancreatin plus ox bile acid to increase the acidity in the gut, which assists digestion of nutrients

Dosage: 1 capsule with each meal or follow instructions on the bottle

Pancreas natural glandular

Dosage: 3 capsules (1275 mg total) with each meal and 10 capsules (4250 mg) between meals, 3× daily

To support hormone balance:

Thyroid glandular

Dosage: 1 capsule (40 mg) daily

Maca

This is a Peruvian root known for its hormone-balancing properties
Dosage: 2 capsules (1000 mg) before breakfast and lunch

Berberine

This is a traditional Chinese medicine known for its anti-inflammatory and anti-diabetic effects

Dosage: 1 capsule (200 mg), 2× daily

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Dr Sarah Myhill THE INTEGRATIVE GP

Waking up the brain

A holistic approach can reverse dementia, says Sarah Myhill

Dr Sarah Myhill has worked in the NHS and private practice since 1981. For 17 years she was the Honorary Secretary of the British Society for Ecological Medicine, a medical society interested in environmental causes of disease and non-drug treatments. She helps run the Society's training courses and lectures regularly on topics such as chronic fatigue syndrome.

As a medical student in the 1970s, I remember the excitement of a consultant neurologist when I sat in on his outpatient clinic with a group of fellow students. “You’re about to see a remarkable, once-in-a-lifetime case,” he said.

In came Alf and his wife Vera, aged 78. The consultant started asking Vera questions, which she answered. He then repeated them, and she answered as if she had never heard them before. She had no short-term memory.

When the consultant challenged her about this, she said, “Well I had a very late night. I was away at a party and I expect I am still a bit hungover.”

Her husband, Alf, rolled his eyes and looked into the middle distance. It was obvious Vera had fabricated a story to explain her lapse in memory.

Apart from this curious exchange, Vera seemed physically fit and well. The consultant had no suggestions other than supportive therapy, as Vera would inevitably decline.

After the couple left, we were asked to guess the diagnosis. We had no idea, this being completely outside of our experience in both life and medicine to date. The consultant leaned back with a look of superiority and said, “I think this is a case of dementia, probably due to Alzheimer’s disease. Remember that name. If you can hold that in your head for finals, you will impress your examiners.”

We trotted off home repeating the word ‘Alzheimer’s’, so it would stick in our memories.

Alois Alzheimer (1864–1915) was a German psychiatrist and neuropathologist. Whilst working at the Frankfurt Asylum in 1901, he became obsessed with a patient called Auguste Deter, a 51-year-old with strange behavioural symptoms including loss of short-term memory. When questioned she would often repeat the words: “Ich hab mich verloren” (I have lost myself). Upon Auguste’s death,

Alois investigated her brain and found amyloid plaques and neurofibrillary tangles. Auguste is credited as the first person diagnosed with Alzheimer’s disease.

Alzheimer’s has now become a household word. But why? There has to be an environmental explanation. Indeed, the World Health Organization tells us that the disease is 5 per cent genetic and 95 per cent environmental.

Doctors like myself have been asking the question ‘why?’ for decades. If one knows the *why* of a disease, they can figure out *how* to prevent and treat it.

One such ‘why-asking’ doctor is neurologist Dr Dale Bredesen of the Mary Easton Center for Alzheimer’s Disease Research at the University of California, Los Angeles. Bredesen recognized that Alzheimer’s had many varied causes and set up a study of 10

If a drug trial had achieved such a result, it would have made headline news

patients (aged 55 to 75) in which each was given personalized therapy.

Since having type 2 diabetes is a major risk factor for Alzheimer’s, the most important aspect of Bredesen’s treatment plan was a ketogenic diet, a high-fat, adequate-protein, low-carbohydrate diet recommended for type 2 diabetes. The plan also stipulated that all food had to be consumed within a 12-hour window and avoided within three hours before bedtime. This, together with melatonin and other supplements, was intended to improve sleep quality, as poor sleep is another major risk factor for dementia. During sleep, the brain ‘self-cleans’, potentially clearing amyloid from the brain.

Because Western diets are so deficient in micronutrients, Bredesen’s patients were also given a basic package of vitamin, mineral and essential fatty acid supplements to improve antioxidant

status and mitochondrial dysfunction.

All patients exercised 30 to 60 minutes a day, four to six days a week, took part in stress-reducing techniques like yoga, meditation and music therapy, and were encouraged to exercise their brains.

Those with high homocysteine levels, who were hypothyroid or had poor adrenal function or heavy-metal toxicity received the appropriate treatments for their conditions.

Bredesen’s results were astonishing. Only one patient—the most severely afflicted at the start of the trial, with rapidly progressive dementia—continued to decline. Six patients whose cognitive decline had substantially impacted their job performance were able to return to work or continue working without difficulty. Three more saw substantial improvement in memory and cognitive function. If a drug trial had achieved such a result, it would have made headline news.

I rarely see dementia patients, but the patients I see with chronic fatigue syndrome/myalgic encephalomyelitis suffer from marked cognitive dysfunction including poor short-term memory and an inability to multitask. The regimes I use to treat them are essentially the same as Bredesen’s holistic approach.

One of my patients measured his recovery by the time it took him to complete the *Daily Telegraph* cryptic crossword puzzle—he got back to his usual 30 mins. My colleague Craig celebrated the return of his cognitive function by solving all the questions on the Oxford University Entrance Paper for Mathematics from the years 1962 to 2011. In his darkest days, he’d forgotten how to count to ten.

The most crucial point is: don’t wait to be diagnosed with Alzheimer’s before you take action. Look after your body and brain, and do something at the first sign of any cognitive decline, before it’s too late.

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Why soluble fibre is so super...

Generations have been told to make sure that they have 'roughage' in their diets. However, some types of fibre are just that. Rough. This can sometimes lead to an irritated gut lining and digestive upset. So, these days, nutritionists often recommend soluble fibres, which are not only great for digestive health, but have been shown to encourage health and wellness too.

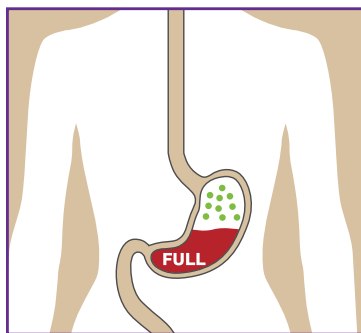
Healthy digestion

Studies have shown that Glucomannan is fantastic for gut bacteria, helping to create a favourable environment for growth of bacteria which help to keep the gut healthy (specifically, Lactobacilli and Bidifobacteria species). These good bacteria are involved in good immune function and in helping to maintain the integrity of the gut lining – vital for healthy digestion and absorption of nutrients from the foods that we eat. As well as this, Glucomannan is often chosen to encourage healthy bowel regularity.

Maintaining healthy weight

The water-soluble nature of Glucomannan means that it could help to give the feeling of fullness for longer, which some who are following a weight management programme find especially useful. In itself, Glucomannan has a 'low energy density' and researchers have acknowledged that it can encourage the feeling of fullness as it expands in the digestive tract.

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A healthy smile

The right food and preventative care can help ward off dental problems in cats, says holistic vet Rohini Sathish

Q My vet noticed some tartar build-up on my four-year-old cat Charlie's teeth at his annual check-up. The vet said I should be brushing Charlie's teeth, but that's proving to be impossible. Can you recommend any other ways to keep the teeth healthy and prevent future dental problems?
C.H., via email

A Dental disease is very common in cats, especially among breeds with poor tooth alignment like Siamese, Persian and Chinchilla. Infectious diseases such as FIV (feline immunodeficiency virus), FELV (feline leukaemia virus) and feline calicivirus can also cause dental problems. But probably the most important reason for bad teeth in our domesticated pets today is diet.

Animals are meant to chew raw food that is rich in vitamins, minerals and enzymes. The majority of commercial pet foods use ingredients that have almost no nutritional value to start with, and what little nutrients they do have are destroyed with the high heat used in the manufacturing process.

Dry food and crunchy biscuits do not clean a carnivore's teeth as most pet food manufacturers would have us believe.

In the wild, chewing through tough skin and bones scrubbed animals' teeth like a tooth brush, preventing the build-up of tartar, whereas most commercial food does not require much tooth action at all. On the contrary, the food forms a kind of glue that adheres to the teeth, contributing to dental decay. Poor food also leads to halitosis (foul breath), as it

festers in the gut, and the offensive odour then backs up.

Some of the most common dental diseases in cats are gingivitis (gum inflammation), periodontitis (more serious inflammation that affects the gums and supporting structures of the teeth) and ulcerative gingivostomatitis (severe and chronic inflammation of the gums and mucosa), as well as fractures of the teeth due to trauma or jaw abnormalities. Symptoms can range from bleeding gums, bad breath and tartar formation to a reluctance to eat and groom, vocalizing, pawing at the mouth, drooling and facial swelling.

As well as being painful, dental problems can cause systemic effects. Bacteria from the infected teeth and gums can enter the blood stream, damaging the kidneys and heart.

Dental problems also tend to suppress the immune system and render the animal more

vulnerable to other degenerative diseases. It's therefore important to get your pet checked by a vet if you do suspect any issues. Even better, you can do your best to prevent dental problems occurring in the first place.

Prevention

Unlike many health conditions, dental disease can be prevented almost entirely with natural home care. Here are my top tips for looking after your cat's teeth.

Feed a raw diet

If possible, feed Charlie a raw food diet that's rich in beneficial nutrients. Natures Menu has a great range of raw and natural foods for both cats and dogs, including convenient, complete and balanced meals made with human-grade meat (www.naturesmenu.co.uk). Otherwise, check out Natural Instinct's frozen raw cat food range (www.naturalinstinct.com).

Raw, meaty bones from the butcher that do not splinter can be given to dogs

“Dental disease can be prevented almost entirely with natural home care”





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and cats regularly to stop tartar build-up. I recommend knuckle bones for dogs and chicken necks for cats. Pets must always be supervised while they eat bones to stop splintering and accidental swallowing. You can also feed Charlie raw or steamed vegetables to help fight tartar.

Alternatively, you can try prescription dry dental diets such as Hill's t/d or Royal Canin Dental, formulated to reduce plaque and tartar build-up. They are made with increased amounts of vegetable fibres that wrap around the teeth and prevent the food particles from adhering, or they pull the tartar away when animals bite into them.

Get brushing

Brushing your cat's teeth twice a week can go a long way in preventing dental disease. You say you've found this difficult, but don't give up! There are lots of different cat toothbrushes available, including 'finger brushes', which may be easier to use than a traditional-looking toothbrush.

Never use human toothpaste to brush your cat's teeth; instead opt for one of the many specially formulated pastes and gels suitable for cats, preferably made with natural ingredients, or make your own (see right). Dr Mercola's Dental Gel, a plant-based product containing eight essential oils, is a good choice, as is Dorwest's Roast Dinner Toothpaste, which contains sage oil, a natural antiseptic and antimicrobial that's great for keeping teeth and gums healthy (both available online from www.healthfulpets.co.uk).

If your cat simply won't let you brush his teeth, try Logic Oral Hygiene Gel, a multi-enzyme formula designed to help fight plaque and bad breath. It's best used with a toothbrush but can also be applied directly into the mouth, or to your cat's paw for him to lick off.

There's also ProDen PlaqueOff Powder, which you sprinkle onto your pet's food daily. It's made with a brown seaweed called *Ascophyllum nodosum*, said to be beneficial for oral health.

Inspect your pet

Inspect your pet's mouth regularly for any signs and symptoms of dental problems. It's also important to arrange for regular oral exams by a vet, who can nip any problems in the bud early.



Simple sage 'toothpaste' for cats and dogs

Sage is an effective remedy for mouth, skin and digestive problems in dogs and cats. It is great for keeping teeth clean and preventing gingivitis as it contains thujone, a volatile oil that has powerful antiseptic, antibiotic and antimicrobial qualities. Try this simple sage remedy for cleaning your pet's teeth:

- 1 Place a handful of fresh sage leaves in a mug and add boiling water
- 2 Let this infuse for 10 minutes to make a tea, then let it cool down
- 3 Take a small children's toothbrush or a specially designed pet toothbrush, and dip it in the cooled sage tea
- 4 Gently brush around the teeth and gums of your dog or cat

Source: *You Can Heal Your Pet* (Hay House, 2015)

“Lactoferrin, available in capsule form, may be helpful for cats with gum disease”

Treatment

The usual treatment for cats with early gingivitis and mild periodontal disease is a simple descale and polish. But this needs to be done under general anaesthetic, which comes with risks. Other conditions may require X-rays, root canal treatment or extraction.

There are a variety of complementary and alternative therapies that can be useful for dental problems in cats.

Homeopathy

For mild gingivitis, Carbo Vegetabilis 6C can be given 3-4 times daily for 5 to 7

days. For severe gingivitis, Mercurius Solubilis 30C can be used 4 times a day after veterinary treatment.

For a toothache, I recommend Chamomilla 30c 4-6 times daily, and for a tooth abscess, Aconite 30C to be dosed every 1-3 hours.

For teeth extractions, arnica is useful when given before and after dental work.

Chinese herbal medicine

I have found that Astragalus 10-Plus, whose main ingredient comes from the root of the astragalus plant, helps in treating tooth abscesses and infections. It may even help in infections resistant to antibiotics.

Supplements

Lactoferrin, available in capsule form, may be helpful for cats with gum disease. When the gums are inflamed, giving cats half or one 350-mg capsule once a day can be beneficial. Try mixing it in milk or syrup to make it more palatable.

Coenzyme Q10 is a naturally occurring enzyme that has been found helpful for encouraging bleeding gums to heal quickly. The Dr Mercola brand produces a cat-friendly formula made with ubiquinol, the active form of CoQ10.

Healing

Dental pain can easily cause pets to become withdrawn and depressed. Both hands-on healing and distant healing can help them recover quickly and can also relax them before and after dental procedures. See my book *You Can Heal Your Pet* for how to give this kind of healing to your pet.



Rohini Sathish, DVM, MSC, MRCVS, MHAO, MCIVT

Dr Sathish is an award-winning holistic vet with 22 years of experience. After training in

acupuncture, acupressure, energy healing, Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT), animal communication and herbal medicine, she now actively integrates conventional veterinary treatments with complementary therapies and is co-author of *You Can Heal Your Pet* (Hay House UK, 2015). You can contact Dr Sathish at her website: www.rohinisholisticvetcare.com

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We are not alone. The average human body contains approximately 30–40 trillion cells, but also about 40 trillion microorganisms including bacteria, fungi and viruses. In fact, there are so many microorganisms in our bodies that they actually make up between one to three per cent of our weight—if you weigh 70 kg, approximately one to two kg of that is made up of bacteria and other tiny living organisms.

For decades, it was impossible to accurately estimate just how many different strains of microorganisms we play host to. A few hundred had been isolated at most. But recently developed genome sequencing methods have enabled the Human Microbiome Project (HMP), in partnership with the US National Institutes of Health, to differentiate human and microbial DNA. The facts are now in: more than 10,000 microbial species occupy the human ecosystem.

HMP researchers report that this astonishing variety of microbes contributes more genes to aid human survival than the human body itself. Genes carried by bacteria in the gastrointestinal tract, for example, allow humans to digest foods and absorb nutrients that otherwise would be unavailable for absorption.

The good bacteria in our bodies actually contain more genes than the body itself. Here's a guide to the best of these tiny travellers and how to get more of them, writes Cate Montana

“Humans don't have all the enzymes we need to digest our own diet,” says Lita Proctor, PhD, HMP programme manager. “Microbes in the gut break down many of the proteins, lipids and carbohydrates in our diet into nutrients that we can then absorb. Moreover, the microbes produce beneficial compounds like vitamins and anti-inflammatories that our genome cannot produce.”

The microbial landscape also varies enormously across the human body. The mouth, nose, skin, lower intestine, and vagina have wildly diverse ‘microbial ecosystems’—as different as the Amazon rainforest and Sahara Desert.

In the early 20th century, French paediatrician Henri Tissier noticed that babies fed formula were far more prone to diarrhoea than breastfed babies, and observed that the formula-fed children also had a lower number of Y-shaped bacteria (“bifid” bacteria) in their stools compared to healthy breastfed babies.

Way back in 1906, he suggested that giving bifid bacteria to the babies with diarrhoea could restore their health. Today this approach is commonplace, and the added microorganisms used to boost the properties of the indigenous flora in the body are called probiotics.

Beneficial bacteria

‘Probiotic’ is derived from Greek, meaning ‘for biological life’. *Lactobacillus* and *Bifidobacterium* microorganisms are the most commonly used, but with over 10,000 different strains in the human body, sorting out the beneficial from the not-so-helpful is a mind-boggling task.

With the increasing popularity of probiotics and prebiotics (the non-digestible fibre compounds that feed probiotics) in everything from yoghurt to fermented foods, experts like Mary Ellen Sanders, PhD, Executive Science Officer at the International Scientific Association for Probiotics and Prebiotics, advises that people become more educated about what does and doesn't constitute a viable commercial probiotic.

Says Sanders: “Most probiotics don't have to be linked to a prebiotic in order to function. And fermented foods are not probiotics *per se*. In order to call

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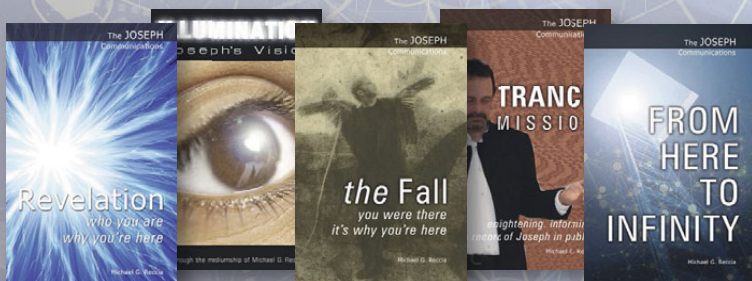
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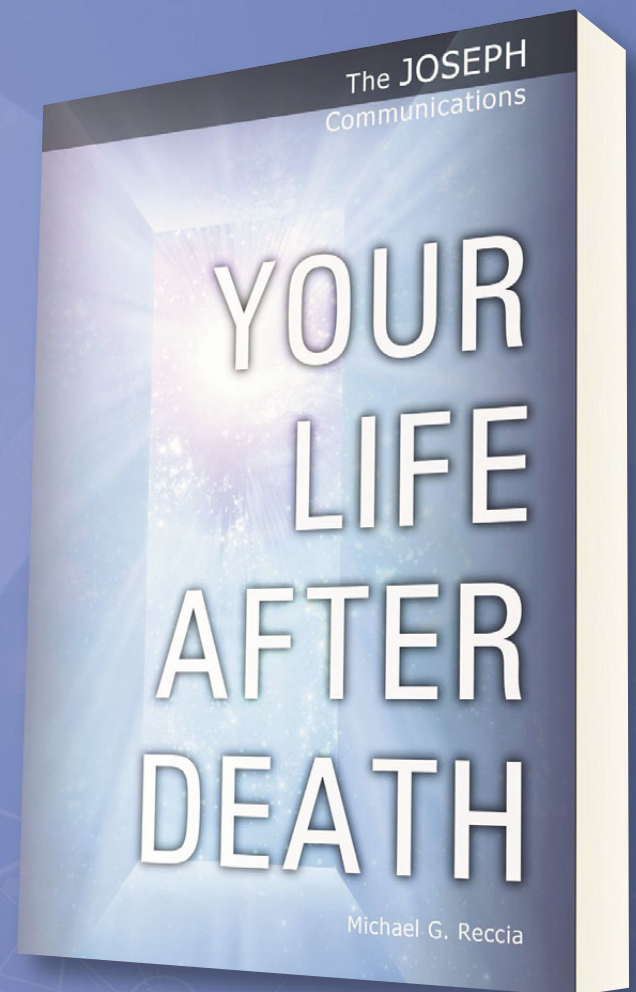


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something probiotic, it has to be isolated and studied in a human trial and shown to have a health benefit. Probiotics are definitely a higher bar than your off-the-shelf fermented food.”

It doesn't help that the exact mechanisms involved in probiotic function aren't clearly understood. So far, probiotics are known to assist in the production of short-chain fatty acids, lower gut pH, reduce competition for nutrients, stimulate and strengthen the mucosal barrier of the gut, and modulate the immune system. Notably, they induce the secretion of immunoglobulin A, an antibody necessary for the normal immune function of mucous membranes, and enhance the ability of T cells to fight infections.¹

For a potential probiotic strain to be considered viable as a health product, it must be able to survive stomach acid and bile, adhere to the cells lining the gut surface, and provide antimicrobial action against disease-causing bacteria. Their ability to break down bile salts (a process called hydrolysis), necessary for their own survival, is also critical for fat metabolism.²

Effects on health

Health benefits of probiotics include aiding in digestion, reducing inflammation and increasing nutrient absorption. They've been shown to help numerous conditions including allergic reactions, Crohn's disease, constipation, candidiasis, urinary tract infections and lactose intolerance,³ and they induce the remission of ulcerative colitis symptoms.⁴ Certain probiotics including *Lactobacillus rhamnosus* GG and *Saccharomyces boulardii* are effective for acute gastroenteritis in children and infants.⁵

Probiotics have shown an effect on lowering blood cholesterol levels and are believed to lower the risks of cardiovascular and coronary heart diseases.⁶ They can also help people suffering from psychological problems such as depression, anxiety and cognitive symptoms.⁷

“Certain probiotics actually help you absorb calcium and other minerals in your gut,” says Kristin McGary, LAc, MAc, CFMP, a holistic health practitioner in Boulder, Colorado. “Others make B vitamins for us. They

WHEN TO TAKE PROBIOTICS

When you're taking antibiotics

Antibiotics are well known to wreak havoc on the gut flora, killing off good bacteria as well as bad. In the past, people were advised not to take probiotics while on antibiotics—to wait until afterwards because it was believed the antibiotics would kill ingested probiotics. The trouble with this approach is that it allows pathogenic microorganisms to proliferate unopposed by beneficial bacteria, often resulting in antibiotic-associated diarrhoea and other problems. Probiotics should be taken at least one hour before or two hours after ingestion of antibiotics.

When you're under stress

Stress threatens homeostasis in the body and has both short- and long-term effects on the gastrointestinal tract. Stress can lead to inflammatory

bowel disease, irritable bowel syndrome, ulcers and gastroesophageal reflux disease, food allergies, depression and various cognitive symptoms. Probiotics can help.⁸

When you're travelling

Changing geographic locations means both stress and a change in food and water that potentially play host to new and unfriendly bacteria and virus strains. Bolstering gastrointestinal strength by taking viable probiotics is just common sense.

Prophylactic use

Probiotics are not a 'cure all' and it is not necessary to take

them to be healthy. But according to Dr. Mary Ellen Sanders, PhD, Executive Science Officer of the International Scientific Association for Probiotics and Prebiotics, probiotics support the immune system; decrease respiratory, gut, vaginal and urinary tract infections; relieve diarrhoea, constipation and bloating; help support an effective gut barrier and manage symptoms of irritable bowel syndrome—even help manage cholesterol levels. What's not to love about that?

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“Certain probiotics actually help you absorb calcium and other minerals in your gut”

provide protection from infection. They positively impact our metabolism. I see huge changes in patients when I've done testing on people before and after extensive probiotic use. I see a greater diversity in their microbiome and a marked decrease in autoimmune issues.”

There is also clinical evidence that probiotics and prebiotics may aid in the prevention and treatment of certain cancers, including colon cancer, the second leading cause of cancer death in the United States. In addition to decreasing intestinal inflammation and boosting the immune system, probiotics also bind to possible toxins and food-based carcinogens and reduce bacterial enzymes in the colon that promote cancer.⁹

Evidence suggests that an imbalance in the gut microbiome triggers inflammation in the lining of the oesophagus (the mucosa) and eventually the formation of tumours there.¹⁰ Laboratory studies have also



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suggested that probiotics might be useful for preventing oesophageal adenocarcinoma,¹⁰ and they've additionally uncovered promising evidence that probiotics can dramatically slow the growth of liver cancer by impeding the creation of new blood vessels to feed the tumour.¹¹ While these results may not apply to humans, there is also data showing that the microbiome on the tongue of patients with liver carcinoma differs from that of healthy people, giving even more credence to the idea that probiotics might benefit such patients.¹²

For probiotics to have a health benefit, they must be ingested in sufficient amounts. In most countries, including the United States, regulations do not yet require manufacturers to include the amounts of probiotics on the label. In Canada and Italy, however, foods labelled as 'probiotic' must contain at least 1 billion colony-forming units (CFUs) of probiotics per serving—that's the number of living bacteria in the product.

According to McGary, "I like adults to use products that are rated to contain around 100 billion CFUs. I'll start them with 25 billion per dose and slowly build them up."

Sources and side-effects

There are few side-effects to using probiotics. McGary says those mainly occur when the newly introduced good bacteria kill off the bad guys and 'die-off' occurs, creating a short-term toxic effect as the dead bacteria are flushed out of the body.

Some patients become constipated, she says. Others get loose stools and can feel really uncomfortable—which is why it's a good idea for people to work with a healthcare provider when they're dealing with their immune system and gut issues. "It can take from two to four weeks for the gut to balance with the introduction of new flora," McGary says.

Another confusing aspect of probiotics is what form to take them in. "What we lack in the literature base are studies that compare a probiotic as a dried supplement to a probiotic in yoghurt," says Sanders. "We have no head-to-head comparisons where you can say one works better than the other or that both of them are equivalent."

Overall, Sanders says she sees benefit

Food sources of probiotics

Yoghurt and kefir. As with raw cheese (below), these are not advised if you're lactose intolerant. If so, investigate sources from goat's or sheep's milk and make sure the product comes from grass-fed, organic animals. Strains of healthy bacteria added to yoghurt and kefir include *L. bulgaricus*, *S. thermophilus*, *L. acidophilus*, *L. casei* and *B. bifidus*.

Raw cheese. Raw and unpasteurized cheeses contain probiotics including *S. thermophilus*, *B. bifidus*, *L. bulgaricus* and *L. acidophilus*.

Kombucha. Fermented black tea using a 'starter' colony of bacteria and yeast called a 'SCOBY', kombucha is loaded with good bacteria.

Tempeh/natto. Fermented soybeans can be found in Japanese food stores. They contain the probiotic *B. subtilis* that favourably stimulates the immune system.

Fermented vegetables. Sauerkraut and kimchi are both made from fermented cabbage and other vegetables. While not high in probiotics, these prebiotics are high in organic acids that support the growth of good bacteria in the gut.



“In Canada and Italy, foods labelled as ‘probiotic’ must contain at least 1 billion colony-forming units (CFUs) of probiotics per serving”

from taking probiotics in a food source like yoghurt or kefir for the added nutrition the food provides. McGary, on the other hand, disagrees.

"The *Lactobacillus*, *Acidophilus*, *Bifidophilus* and all of those different strains in yoghurt that help the fermentation process are not resistant to stomach acid," she says. This is why so many yoghurt brands include statements like "contains *Lactobacilli* and *Bifidobacteria* in addition to the yoghurt cultures" on the label. Adding these strains to the yoghurt ensures that some probiotics will survive intestinal transit and reach your colon. But even with the added strains, McGary says, you're not getting a high enough dosage to be effective.

Another big concern is freeze-dried probiotics in stores or online. Tests done on probiotics show they are often only 30 to 50 percent viable right off the shelves because of poor handling, high heat conditions during shipping, lack of refrigeration or the simple fact that they've been stored in the warehouse too long before being sold.

Turn the page to find out which probiotic strains are good for different situations

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RESOURCES

www.isappscience.org
www.usprobioticguide.com
www.kristinmcgary.com

WHICH PROBIOTIC?

One of the biggest holes in our understanding of probiotics is knowing exactly what each strain is good for and what kind of probiotic to take for what situation. However, there are a few well-studied species with consistent results in the following areas.

| SPECIES | WHAT IS IT? | WHAT'S IT GOOD FOR? |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| <i>Lactobacillus</i> | These are lactic-acid-forming and the most commonly found species of probiotic | Produces enzymes to digest and metabolize proteins and carbohydrates; helps synthesize B vitamins and vitamin K; enhances innate and acquired immunity; protects against <i>Salmonella</i> and <i>H. pylori</i> , <i>Candida</i> and <i>E. coli</i> |
| <i>L. acidophilus</i> | An easy and effective colonizer found in the small intestine | Supports immune health; aids digestion of dairy foods; boosts nutrient absorption; relieves gas and diarrhoea; supports vaginal and urinary tract health in women |
| <i>L. rhamnosus</i> | One of the most widely used and extensively studied probiotic strains | Treats and prevents rotavirus diarrhoea; prevents antibiotic-associated diarrhoea; treats diarrhoea caused by <i>Clostridium difficile</i> ; prevents and treats atopic dermatitis and eczema in infants; helps regulate the immune system |
| <i>L. fermentum</i> | This strain is effective for supporting a detox regimen and handling the digestion of food by-products | Aids digestion; supports detoxification |
| <i>L. salivarius K12</i> | This tough strain can survive in difficult environments. It's found in the mouth and generally curbs the growth of unwanted bacteria. People with this strain in their system have less plaque and fewer sore throats | Promotes oral health; mitigates bad breath; supports the immune system |
| <i>L. paracasei</i> | This particularly tough strain is found in the small intestine and has an unusual ability to support liver health | Supports liver function |
| <i>B. bifidum</i> | This species produces lactic acid and helps to digest dairy products. It also efficiently breaks down complex carbohydrates, proteins and fats. It populates both the small and large intestine | Aids digestion; helps with nutrient absorption; provides relief from diarrhoea |
| <i>B. coagulans</i> | This lactic acid-producing bacteria produces enzymes that assist with the digestion of lactose. It also aids in the absorption and use of calcium, phosphorus and iron in the body | Aids digestion of dairy products; supports nutrient absorption; provides relief from constipation; supports vaginal health |
| <i>B. longum</i> | This non-lactic acid-producing bacteria is very common in adults. It helps strengthen and maintain the health of the gut wall. It is very effective at mitigating toxins | Aids in the digestion of dairy foods; aids general digestion; supports detoxification; boosts immune health |
| <i>B. infantis</i> | This bacteria is most prevalent in babies | Aids digestion; provides relief from bloating and constipation |
| <i>Saccharomyces boulardii</i> | This is a yeast probiotic species | Highly effective against <i>C. difficile</i> infections; provides protection against <i>E. coli</i> ; treats AIDS-related diarrhoea; helps prevent relapses of Crohn's disease; helps prevent and mitigate ulcerative colitis; provides relief for inflammatory bowel disease |
| <i>S. salivarius M18</i> | Found in the mouth | Supports inflammatory responses in the gums; supports healthy gums and teeth |

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The whole picture

For Laura Borghi, tackling endometriosis holistically with diet and lifestyle changes as well as mind-body therapies was the key to beating her painful symptoms for good



It wasn't long after moving to the UK

that Italy-born Laura Borghi started to get ill. “I moved in with a family in London when I was 21 to work as an au pair,” said Laura. “I went from eating fresh food from the local grocery store to ready meals from M&S. I put on seven kilos in three months and began to get really painful periods.”

Doctors dismissed Laura's pain as ‘normal’ and told her to take painkillers, but it started to take over her life. “It was really debilitating,” said Laura. “I'd get a stabbing pain in my abdominals and lower back around ovulation and just before my period that would last for two to three hours at a time. It made me feel sick, and once on the train I had to call my boyfriend at the time to pick me up as I couldn't walk from the pain.”

Laura also suffered with premenstrual syndrome (PMS) and irregular cycles—symptoms she'd never experienced before.

It wasn't till three years later that Laura discovered that none of this was ‘normal’. In fact, she had a gynaecological condition called endometriosis, whereby cells similar to the ones lining the womb (endometrium) grow elsewhere in the body, causing problems like severe pain, heavy periods and infertility. These cells can be found anywhere in the body, but the most common sites are the ovaries, fallopian tubes and abdomen.

For Laura, it was her ovaries that were affected. “They found cysts on my ovaries they called ‘chocolate cysts,’” said Laura, so-called because the contents are dark and tarry. She was told there was no cure for endometriosis, but she was offered surgery to remove the cysts, and the contraceptive pill to manage the symptoms.

“I refused the surgery because it scared me,” said Laura. “But I did go on the Pill. I didn't know any better at the time.”

Seeds of change

Laura took the Pill for two years, during which time her endometriosis pain stopped. “The Pill prevented me from ovulating and menstruating, so I didn't get the

pain I'd usually get during those times,” said Laura.

But Laura began to get concerned about the long-term effects of taking synthetic hormones, so decided to look online for alternative ways to manage her endometriosis.

Laura came across a nutritional therapist in London who specialized in endometriosis and made an appointment to see her. “She gave me a plan to follow,” said Laura. “But she didn't really explain the reasons behind it and the causes of my condition. It all felt a bit rushed.”

Nonetheless, the consultation “planted a seed” in Laura, who felt compelled to find out more about nutrition and its role in health and disease. After a bit more online research, she stumbled upon the College of Naturopathic Medicine (CNM), a training provider in nutrition and other natural therapies, with several colleges across the UK and Ireland. Laura enrolled, in the hope that she could not only help herself but also change her career and potentially help others in the future.

A holistic approach

At the college, “things started to click” for Laura. “I learned that what you put in your body is so important,” she said. “That starts with food, but it's also about your environment—the chemicals you put on your skin and use around the home. I started to really look at my body from a holistic point of view.”

The first step Laura took towards this was to come off the Pill. “There are so many risks,” said Laura. “And it was just suppressing the symptoms.”

This resulted in Laura's severe pain coming back, “much worse than before”. But instead of feeling

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terrified and upset, as she used to, Laura started to see her pain “as a call from my body telling me something is out of balance.” “I realized that rather than fighting this condition in my body, I needed to listen, cooperate with and support my body from all angles,” said Laura. “I started really listening and taking care of myself every day, not just when I was in pain.”

A key part of this was a change of diet. Laura underwent food intolerance testing and discovered that she was sensitive to dairy, so she cut it from her diet completely. She also gave up refined sugar and red meat, and focused instead on fresh organic vegetables—especially cruciferous vegetables like broccoli, kale, cauliflower and Brussels sprouts, as well as organic poultry, wild-caught fish, and plenty of nuts and seeds.

The thinking behind this was simple: eat foods that have an anti-inflammatory effect on the body and that support healthy digestion and the liver, an organ that plays a crucial role in the body’s detoxification processes.

“I had some genetic testing which showed that I don’t metabolize oestrogen well,” said Laura. “This mainly occurs in the liver, so I need to make sure I support it.”

Laura supplemented her diet with omega-3 fatty acids, vitamin D and probiotics, and took several

Endometriosis and your environment

Research shows that your diet and lifestyle can affect your chances of getting endometriosis. Caffeine, alcohol and red meat have been linked to an increased risk of the condition,¹ while eating lots of fresh fruit and vegetables, getting plenty of antioxidant vitamins and minerals—like vitamins A, C and E, zinc and copper—and exercising regularly, seem to reduce the risk.²

Certain environmental chemicals have also been associated with endometriosis. One study found that women with the highest amounts of a common sunscreen chemical derivative known as 2,4-OH-BP in their urine have a 65 per cent greater chance of having endometriosis compared with women with the lowest levels.³ Sunscreen chemicals are widely used in personal care products and can be absorbed into the bloodstream via the skin.

Pesticides, dioxins and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) have been implicated in endometriosis too.⁴ Much of our exposure to these chemicals comes from food, mostly animal fat, so eating an organic, whole-food diet low in animal fats may be beneficial.

Sticking to all-natural cosmetics, personal care and household products can also help reduce your risk.

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anti-inflammatory and liver-supporting herbs including nettle, dandelion and liquorice.

Laura also did her best to minimize her exposure to potentially hormone-disrupting chemicals in cosmetics, toiletries and household products. “I switched to natural makeup and shower gel, and use the bare minimum that I can,” she said. “Your environment is just as important as what you eat.”

Mind–body connections

Another important part of Laura’s holistic approach was addressing emotional and psychological issues, which Laura believes played a role in her endometriosis. “Stress was definitely a big factor for me,” said Laura. “And not letting go of things.”

Laura employed various mind–body techniques and therapies to deal with this, including aromatherapy (see box page 70 for her favourite essential oils), Bach flower remedies, Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT or ‘tapping’), craniosacral therapy, meditation, breathing exercises, yoga, dance classes and simply walking in nature.

All of these helped in some way, said Laura, especially EFT, a self-administered therapy that involves tapping on acupuncture points on the body while focusing on something that is bothering you, and craniosacral therapy, a technique whereby a practitioner gently manipulates your skull to relieve pain and tension in the body.

“I saw a lot of doctors and gynaecologists and they always referred

to endometriosis as an isolated condition,” said Laura. “But I think it has to be viewed holistically and tackled from all angles.”

Seeing results

It didn’t happen overnight, but gradually Laura’s endometriosis symptoms improved, along with her energy levels and mood. Today, at age 36, Laura’s happy to report that she’s 99 per cent pain free, and has been for the last four years. She does occasionally suffer from pain if she gets stressed or strays from her anti-inflammatory diet, but she always has a number of natural remedies on hand to help, like essential oils and ginger tea (see box, below), and doesn’t have to rely on powerful painkilling medication.

Laura’s ‘chocolate cysts’ on her ovaries have also shown signs of improvement. “They’re still there, but they have shrunk,” said Laura. “Scans have confirmed that.”

Now a qualified nutritional therapist, Laura is helping others with endometriosis and other chronic conditions at her clinic in Blackheath, southeast London—using the same holistic approach she used to tackle her own condition.

“I definitely see things from a different perspective now,” said Laura. “I value my health and body very highly and will never take them for granted again.”

Joanna Evans

I will never take my health and my body for granted again



Endometriosis factfile

- Endometriosis affects around 10 per cent of women of reproductive age.
- Symptoms include painful, heavy or irregular periods, bowel and bladder problems, tiredness, insomnia, difficulty getting pregnant and depression. Some women have no symptoms at all.
- No one knows exactly what causes endometriosis or how to cure it, so the goals of conventional medicine are pain relief, slowing its progression and relieving infertility when present. But the usual treatments—painkillers, hormonal drugs and surgery—come with significant risks.
- Gonadotropin-releasing hormone (GnRH) agonists, one of the most popular drugs for endometriosis, can induce ‘pseudo-menopause’, complete with hot flushes, vaginal atrophy, mood swings and osteoporosis.¹

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Useful contacts and resources

Laura Borghi:

www.allyouneedishealth.com

College of Naturopathic Medicine:

www.naturopathy-uk.com; tel: 01342 410 505

Laura’s top tips for managing endometriosis pain

Use essential oils. Mix one to two drops of essential oil with a good carrier oil and use it to massage around the pelvic area, soles of the feet and back of the neck.

“I like to use castor oil as a carrier oil as it has anti-inflammatory properties, helps balance hormones and boosts circulation and the lymphatic system,” says Laura.

Essential oils can also be used with a diffuser or simply inhaled.

“Make sure to only use 100 per cent pure essential oils and only use one to two drops at a time, as they are very concentrated,” says Laura.

Laura’s favourite essentials oils are:

- **Clary sage** (“great for hormonal balance”)
- **Lavender** (“anti-

inflammatory and good for relieving pain, reducing anxiety and stress, and improving sleep”)

- **Frankincense** (“reduces inflammation and anxiety and has been shown to have anti-cancer properties”)

- **Rosemary** (“anti-inflammatory, anticancer and balances hormones”)

Drink ginger tea.

Ginger tea is a great go-to remedy when pain strikes, says Laura. “Ginger contains gingerol, which has strong anti-inflammatory and painkilling properties,” she says. Use one to two teabags per cup of good quality organic ginger tea.

Keep hydrated. Drinking two large glasses of water, preferably filtered

or glass-bottled, can help alleviate pain, says Laura.

Get moving. Join a Zumba or salsa class, or simply dance in your room. “Music, coordination and sweating are a great combination, especially when they involve the hips and pelvic movement,” says Laura. “This helps increase blood and lymphatic circulation—which helps bring more nutrients and oxygen to the tissues— aids detoxification, and makes you feel happier too!”

Try breathing exercises.

Breathe in through your nose for six seconds, hold for three and exhale through your nose for six. “This helps relax muscle tension and reduce pain,” says Laura.

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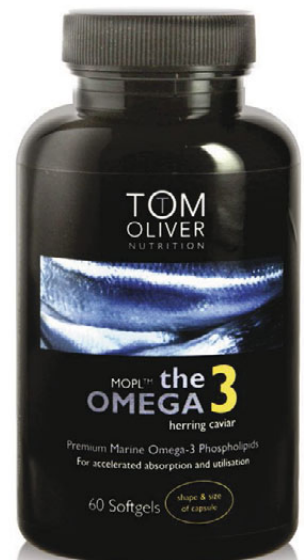
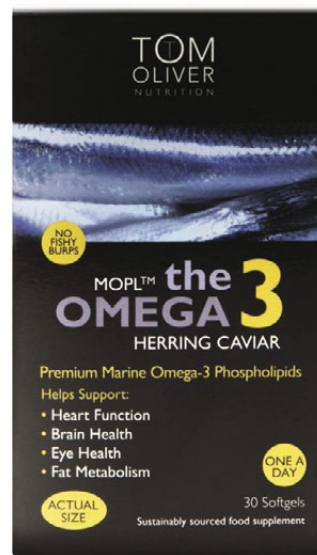
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Gum disease

Nature has plenty to offer when it comes to gum disease, says Joanna Evans

Most adults in the UK have some form of gum disease (also known as periodontal disease), which can include gingivitis (inflamed gums) and periodontitis, a more severe form of inflammation that affects the supporting structures of the teeth and can lead to tooth loss.

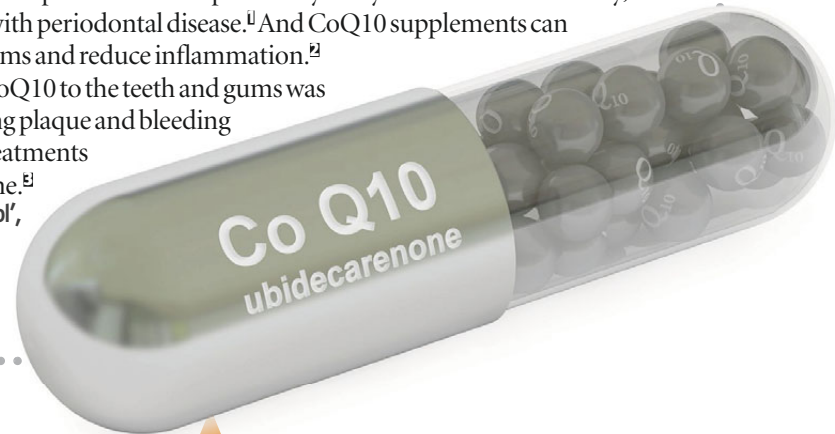
Besides regular brushing, flossing and trips to the dentist to keep gum disease-causing plaque and tartar in check, what else can you do to keep your gums in the pink? Here are five natural remedies that can help (and also see page 55 for the best natural options for cats).

1 Coenzyme Q10

Low levels of coenzyme Q10 (CoQ10), a vitamin-like compound found in practically every cell of the human body, have been reported in as many as 96 per cent of patients with periodontal disease.¹ And CoQ10 supplements can boost CoQ10 concentrations in diseased gums and reduce inflammation.²

Topical CoQ10 seems to be beneficial too. Applying CoQ10 to the teeth and gums was just as effective as traditional scaling treatment for reducing plaque and bleeding gums in a group of gingivitis sufferers—and the two treatments combined were more effective than either treatment alone.³

Suggested dosage: 50–100 mg/day oral CoQ10 (look out for ‘ubiquinol’, the active form), or try twice-daily use of a natural CoQ10-containing mouthwash or toothpaste, like Jason’s Healthy Mouth Toothpaste (jasonnaturalcare.co.uk) or PerioBrite Mouthwash by Nature’s Answer (www.planetorganic.com)



2 Propolis

This sticky resin collected by bees from leaf buds and tree bark is a natural anti-inflammatory and antiseptic that appears to fight plaque and gum disease. In one study, albeit an uncontrolled one (i.e., there was no comparison group taking a placebo), a mouthwash containing 5 per cent Brazilian green propolis showed significant effects in reducing plaque and gum inflammation after three months.⁴ Another, much higher quality trial found that propolis supplements improved chronic periodontitis in type 2 diabetes patients when used in combination with conventional treatments.⁵

Suggested dosage: 400 mg/day propolis capsules or two to three times daily application of a propolis gel or spray, like BeeVital’s B-Gel (www.beevital-uk.com) or Comvita’s Propolis Oral Spray (www.comvita.co.uk)



3 Folate

Not just important for pregnant women, folate (vitamin B9) is showing promise for gum disease. A folate-containing mouthwash (5 mg per 5 mL), swished in the

mouth for one minute twice a day, has been found to reduce gum inflammation and bleeding.³ Taking the vitamin in capsule or tablet form might also be beneficial for gum health, according to one study, although the effective dose (4 mg or 4,000 mcg/day) was very high.⁴
Suggested dosage: Twice daily use of a folic acid-containing mouthwash like PerioBrite Mouthwash by Nature's Answer (www.planetorganic.com); consult a qualified practitioner if you wish to try high-dose folic acid supplementation (and it's probably best to use a non-synthetic form of the vitamin, like L-methylfolate)

4 Green tea

People who drink a lot of green tea seem to have lower rates of periodontal disease. And test tube studies have found that green tea compounds called polyphenols can prevent the growth of oral bacteria.⁸

When a green tea mouthwash went head to head against a conventional mouthwash used to treat gum disease, containing the potent antimicrobial chlorhexidine, both treatments were equally effective in reducing plaque and gum inflammation, and green tea was even better for combatting bleeding gums.⁹

Suggested dosage: Try drinking a few cups of green tea a day, or use some cooled green tea as a daily mouthwash

5 Vitamin C

One of the first symptoms of scurvy—severe vitamin C deficiency—is swollen gums, and there is evidence that people with gum disease are low in this essential vitamin.¹⁰ Supplementing with just 70 mg/day led to improvements in a group of people with periodontitis after only six weeks.¹¹

Suggested dosage: 1–3 g/day oral vitamin C; you could also try a vitamin C-containing mouthwash or toothpaste, like Jason's Powersmile products (www.jasonnaturalcare.co.uk)

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Spot the difference

Sick of spots? Try these 100 per cent natural skincare solutions

There's no shortage of skincare products on the market for tackling spots and acne, which can be a problem whether you're 14 or 40. But many of the lotions, creams, scrubs and gels—prescription and over-the-counter, budget and high-end—are crammed with harsh ingredients that can irritate and inflame the skin. Benzoyl peroxide and topical retinoids, for example, can cause skin redness, peeling and burning, which can end up looking worse than the spots you're trying to get rid of.

Happily, there are products out there that are tough on spots but kind to skin. We've tracked down five 100 per cent natural formulations that target spots without the usual nasties.



The right tree

Thursday Plantation

100% Pure Tea Tree Oil, £5.10 (10 mL)

www.waitrose.com; tel: 0800 188 884

Tea tree oil, derived from the Australian tree *Melaleuca alternifolia*, is a natural antibacterial and anti-inflammatory. It's been found to be just as effective as benzoyl peroxide for reducing acne, but with fewer side-effects.¹ This 100 per cent pure tea tree oil from Australian company Thursday Plantation can be used neat on individual spots or added to water or an oil like jojoba to make a spray.

The bee's knees

Living Nature

Manuka Honey Gel, £22 (50 mL)

www.botanicalbrands.com; tel: 01858 451779

Containing active Manuka honey and Manuka oil from New Zealand, both of which have antibacterial and anti-inflammatory properties,² this potent gel is ideal for fighting spots and healing broken skin. Other ingredients include bacteria-busting tea tree oil, hydrating flax gel and antioxidant vitamin E.



REFERENCES

- 1 Med J Aust, 1990; 153: 455-8
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- 3 Phytomedicine, 2003; 10: 34-8



Take the tube

Green People

Zap & Clear Serum, £13.50 (10 mL)

www.greenpeople.co.uk; tel: 01403 740 350

This 88 per cent organic formula contains tea tree oil and black willow bark extract, a natural source of the widely used anti-acne ingredient salicylic acid, which has antibacterial and pore-cleansing properties. As salicylic acid can sometimes cause dryness and irritation, Zap & Clear also contains soothing aloe vera juice, calming chamomile and marshmallow extracts and a moisturizing blend of olive, sunflower seed and rosehip seed oils.



On the spot

Odylique

Spot-On Serum, £15 (60 mL)

www.odylique.co.uk; tel: 01638 491022

This 95 per cent organic, Soil Association-certified serum features antimicrobial essential oils of lavender and tea tree, soothing herbal extracts of *Calendula* and *Echinacea*, repairing coconut oil and aloe vera juice powder, and anti-inflammatory zinc oxide, a popular topical treatment for acne. The concentrated formula is also great for treating bites, stings, rashes and minor wounds.



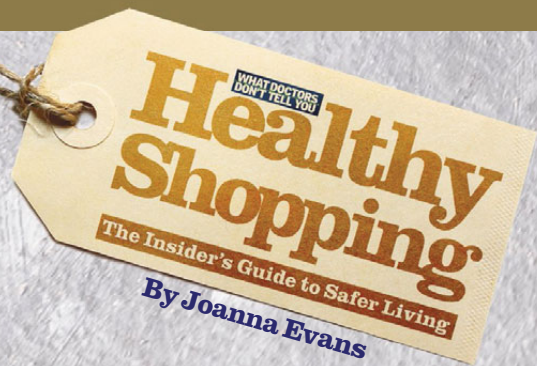
Tone up

100% Pure

Tea Tree & Willow Clarifying Astringent, £31 (118 mL)

uk.100percentpure.com

This alcohol-free toner is packed with anti-acne ingredients like tea tree oil, willow bark extract, witch hazel and turmeric root extract, which has been found to have anti-inflammatory activity against acne-causing bacteria.⁵¹ Despite its astringent nature, it's non-drying and non-irritating, thanks to soothing honeysuckle and burdock root extracts as well as hydrating sodium hyaluronate.



Pass the bar

Treat your taste buds to some vegan, raw chocolate

Dark chocolate is a healthy sweet treat that's been linked with numerous health benefits, from reduced blood pressure to better memory. But if you've ditched dairy or are following a 100 per cent vegan diet, finding a bar you can eat can be tricky.

Although dark chocolate generally doesn't contain milk, it might be made with anhydrous milk fat (created from butter or cream), or include other ingredients derived from dairy products. Some bars may not contain any animal ingredients, but are manufactured in an environment that handles milk, so must carry a 'may contain milk' warning on the packaging.

There are plenty of vegan-friendly chocolate bars out there, though, and we selected five of our favourites here. All come under the category of 'raw chocolate', meaning the cacao beans are minimally processed at low temperatures to keep the beneficial enzymes and antioxidants intact. They are also all free from refined sugar and 100 per cent natural.

Mint condition

Raw Halo

Dark + Mint Raw Chocolate Bar,
£2.79 (35g)

www.rawhalo.com

Certified by the Soil Association and the Vegan Society, this organic and refined sugar-free chocolate bar is a luxuriously smooth combination of raw Peruvian cacao butter and powder (76 per cent minimum cacao solids), coconut sugar and natural mint essential oil. It's one of 12 vegan varieties of chocolate Raw Halo makes, which also includes dairy-free 'mylk' bars—created with creamy cashew nut butter and lucuma powder—great if dark chocolate's not your thing.



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www.natureshealthbox.co.uk

Lovechoc bars come in a variety of different flavours and intensities, but all are certified vegan and made from raw 'Arriba Nacional' cacao beans from Ecuador, which are cold ground rather than roasted to keep their beneficial antioxidants intact.

This organic 'tablet' contains 93 per cent cacao solids and is lovely and sweet thanks to dried coconut blossom nectar, lucuma powder and vanilla extract. As well as being vegan, the bar is gluten-, soya- and refined sugar-free.

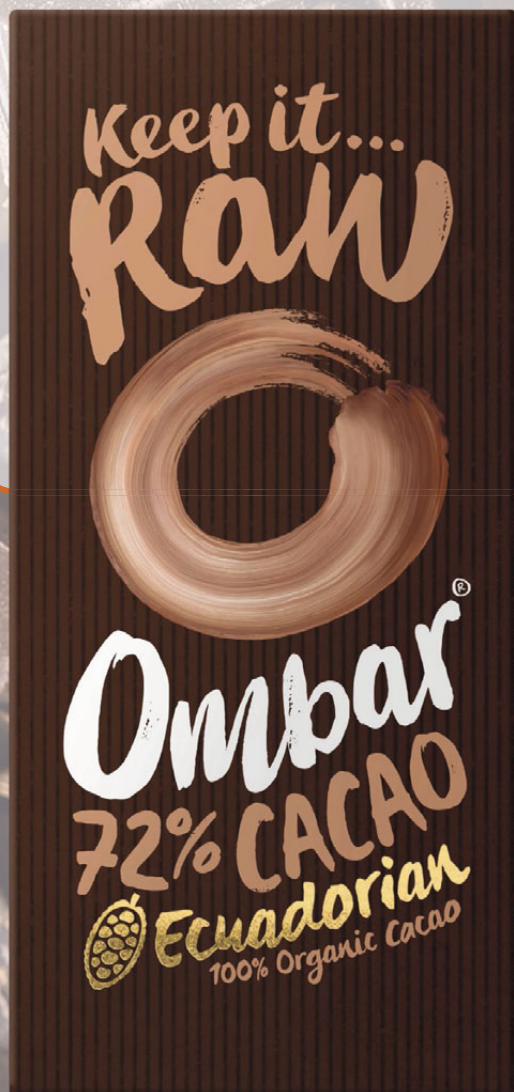
Bar none

Ombar

72% Cacao, £3.29 (70g)

www.ombar.co.uk; tel: 01223 884540

Like all Ombar products, this chocolate bar is vegan and free from refined sugar and gluten. As well as raw Ecuadorian cacao, cocoa butter and coconut sugar, this 72 per cent bar contains a dose of live *Lactobacillus acidophilus* cultures, so it's good for your gut as well as your taste buds. It won a Great Taste award in 2017, and it gets the thumbs up from us, too.



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& coconut chips

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Naturally sweetened with
agave nectar



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Berry good Conscious Chocolate

Goji & Coconut Organic Bar,
£3.12 (50g)

www.consciouschocolate.com;
tel: 01342 313 876

Conscious Chocolate is handmade from raw, ethically sourced ingredients, certified as organic, vegetarian and vegan, and free from gluten, soya and refined sugar. The innovative range includes this delicious Goji & Coconut bar, a blend of raw Ecuadorian cacao powder and butter (70 per cent solids minimum), agave nectar, coconut butter and carob powder with a generous helping of goji berries and coconut chips, plus a dash of cinnamon and Himalayan salt.

Sweet and simple Pana Chocolate

Raw Chocolate 80% Cacao, £3.99 (45g)

www.planetorganic.com

Pana Chocolate bars are certified by the Vegan Society, plus they're raw, organic and free from gluten and refined sugar. There are 18 varieties to choose from, including creative flavours like 'Strawberry & Pistachio' and 'Fig & Wild Orange', but we love the simplicity of this 'Eighty%' bar, made with just two ingredients: cacao (butter and powder; a minimum of 80 per cent) and dark agave nectar.



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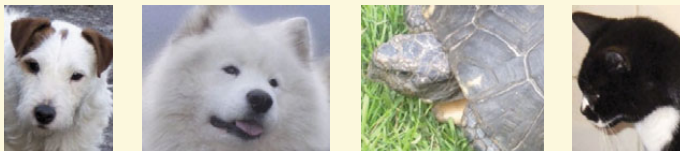


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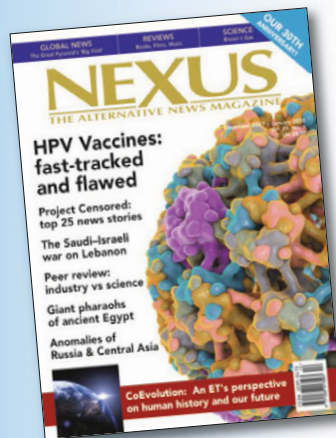


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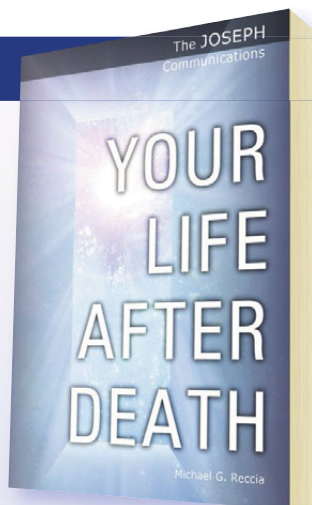
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Drug news (page 17)

What Big Pharma Doesn't Want You to Know ebook: Discover the truth about commonly prescribed drugs such as antidepressants, antibiotics and hormone replacement therapy as well as the over-the-counter drug dangers in this two-part ebook.



Walking tall (page 40)

Your Exercise Plan ebook: The perfect guide if you want to introduce steady, gentle and regular exercise into your life. The exercises in this ebook will help keep you fit and healthy well into old age.



A healthy smile (page 55)

What Vets Don't Tell You ebook: An invaluable resource for anyone with a dog or cat, this 60-page ebook covers vaccinations, pet food and natural ways to care for your pet.



Flooded by the good guys (page 59)

Healing Foods ebook: Hippocrates said that food should be our medicine — and *Healing Foods* explores the theme, focusing on the 'power foods' that may be as effective as drugs and investigating the claims for some of the new 'miracle' foods and drinks on the market.



The whole picture (page 66)

Chronic Pain ebook: This ebook explores what pain is, what causes it, and how it can be treated successfully with natural remedies. A must-have for anyone with back pain, arthritis, fibromyalgia or any other type of chronic pain.



Healthy Shopping (pages 74-77)

Safe Living ebook: If you want to know more about how to shop healthier, check out *Safe Living*. It looks at the pollutants that could be doing you harm in your everyday environment and how to minimize your chemical exposure.

IN THE NEXT ISSUE

May 2018
On sale from April 26

Beyond willpower: how to beat addiction

The vast majority of us are addicted to something — whether sugar, unhealthy foods, alcohol, street drugs or over-the-counter and prescription painkillers — particularly since Big Pharma, ever alert for a growing market, is massively increasing its spend on opioid drugs. So how do you beat the cycle of addiction, physically and psychologically? Celeste McGovern investigates.

Giving your digestion a helping hand

Besides probiotics, the big buzzword is enzymes, those catalytic substances that help you digest your food. But not all digestive enzymes do the same job. For instance, there are ordinary digestive enzymes, then proteolytic enzymes, which help with lowering inflammation, and even fibrinolytic enzymes for preventing blood clots. Cate Montana checks out the best varieties for your particular state of health.

Healthy sitting

We all know we do way too much of it, and we now know it's as bad for us as smoking, but most of us have little choice but to sit for most of the day. So is there a dynamic way to stay seated that minimizes the damage? Charlotte Watts finds the best exercises to avoid the usual postural slump, help free tissues and allow us to sit with ease.

Bad bugs turned good

There's now endless information out there about the need to maximize the 'good-guy' bacteria in the gut by crowding out the bad guys. But new research shows that parasites and worms may actually have a positive effect on our health. Stephen McMurray delves into the latest evidence.

Calories aren't all created equal

It's quality, not quantity

Bryan Hubbard

You wouldn't ask your doctor about nutrition any more than you'd interrogate a nomadic tribesman of the Sahara about the intricacies of snow. The typical doctor's dietary knowledge is primitive, but then, he's only been taught about it in medical school for an average of 10 or so hours over his five years of training.

Most doctors cling to the extraordinary idea, first mooted in 1878 by the German nutritionist Max Rubner, that 'a calorie is a calorie'. Interestingly, it was resurrected in the 1950s by the sugar industry when their products came under public scrutiny for a brief while (before it was successfully deflected to saturated fats in animal products, which became the artery-clogging bad guy until, well, pretty much today).

The 'calorie is a calorie' camp believes it's all to do with quantity, and not quality: all calories are equal. Follow that path to its logical conclusion, and you'll pass through a black hole in deepest space and out into a strange parallel universe where Wonderland suddenly makes sense. In this distorted world, there's no direct-line correlation between what we eat and our overall health—just as long as we're eating enough of anything. Someone who eats 500 calories of Coco Pops every day, for instance, will be as healthy as someone else who munches through a similar quantity of broccoli.

While the 'calorie is a calorie' shibboleth is the dominant idea in medicine, nations will continue to throw enormous sums at treating the sick (at the last count, that's £105bn in the UK, and \$3 trillion in the US, every year). According to the prevailing wisdom, the sums keep rising every year primarily because people are living longer. But that's simplistic: the real problem is that people are living badly. That's borne out by a recent survey that

discovered that the UK truly is the sick man of Europe, and more than half the food in the average supermarket trolley is 'ultra-processed'—"real food has been replaced by salty snacks and sugary cereals, industrially made bread and desserts, ready meals and reconstituted meats as well as sweetened soft drinks," wrote *The Guardian* newspaper.¹

Britain's daily shop is the least healthy of 19 European nations surveyed by researchers at the University of Sao Paulo in Brazil; Germany had the dubious distinction of coming second, with 46 per cent of the average daily shop being made up of processed food, and Ireland coming a commendable third, at 45 per cent of the average basket filled with processed foods.

Unlike doctors, researcher Carlos Monteiro said he had "deep concerns" about the impact that processed food has on our health and

obesity. "Take breakfast cereals like Fruit Loops. They are 50 per cent sugar, but there is no fruit. Ultra-processed foods are essentially new creations of the food industry with very low-cost ingredients in a very attractive product," he said. Not only are they attractively presented, they are also highly addictive, of course.

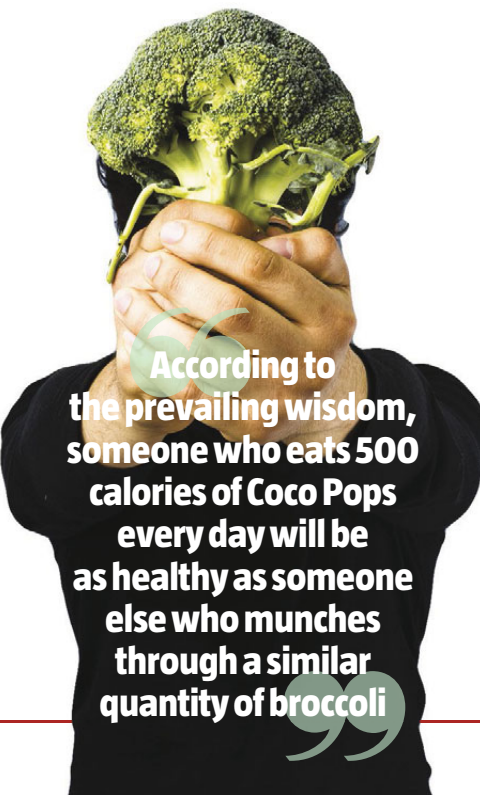
The quality-not-quantity school of thought (and one that is diametrically opposed to the 'a calorie-is-a-calorie' theory) has been explored by Valter Longo, a professor at the University of Southern California. He believes we can live to 110 years old, and that's something that is within our grasp today—if we eat healthily. Not only is the quality of the food we eat vital, we should be eating less, and go on a day-long fast at least four times a year when we consume fewer than 800 calories (that's one in the eye for the calorie-is-a-calorie camp).

Eating well (and less) can also reverse a range of chronic conditions, says Longo, including multiple sclerosis and even some cancers—and he's carried out 15 clinical trials to prove it.

And he walks the walk himself by restricting his sugar intake, eating low to moderate amounts of starches from pasta, bread and rice, and plenty of carbohydrates from legumes and vegetables; protein comes from nuts and salmon rather than from other animal fats.

It's not difficult to follow. "I love food. I'm never hungry, my friends can't believe how much I eat—but people don't understand food. I eat much more food than others, but much less calories," he told *The Times*.²

But then, he knows that it's about quality, not quantity.

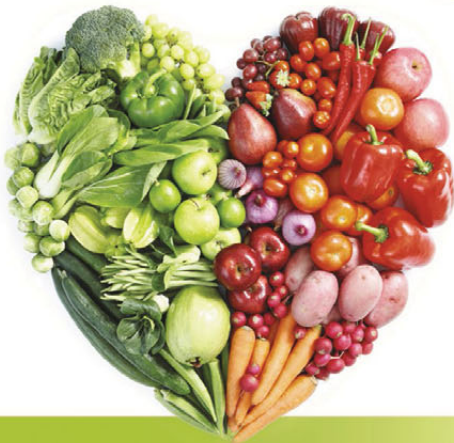


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